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BEHIND THE SCENES
WITH THE KAISER

BEHIND THE SCENES WITH THE KAISER

(1888-1922)

THE TRUE STORY OF THE KAISER
AS HE LIVED, LOVED, PLAYED AND WARRED

BY

THE BARONESS VON LARISCH
OF THE IMPERIAL HOUSEHOLD

VOL. I

PUBLISHED BY
HERTAG PUBLISHING CORPORATION
NEW YORK

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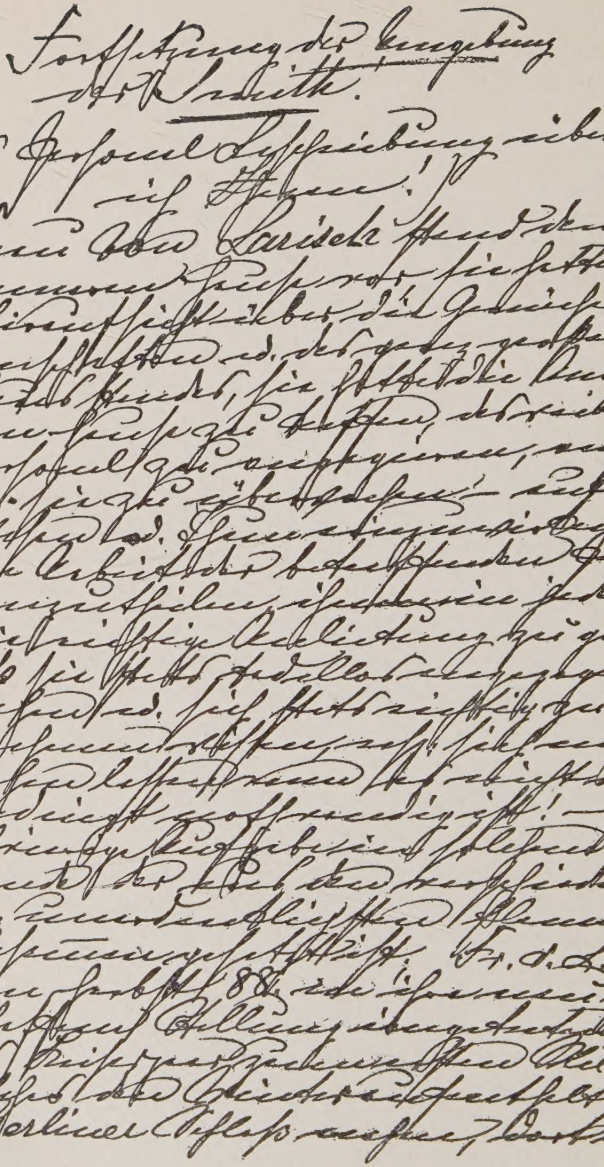
NEW YORK

BEHIND THE SCENES WITH THE KAISER



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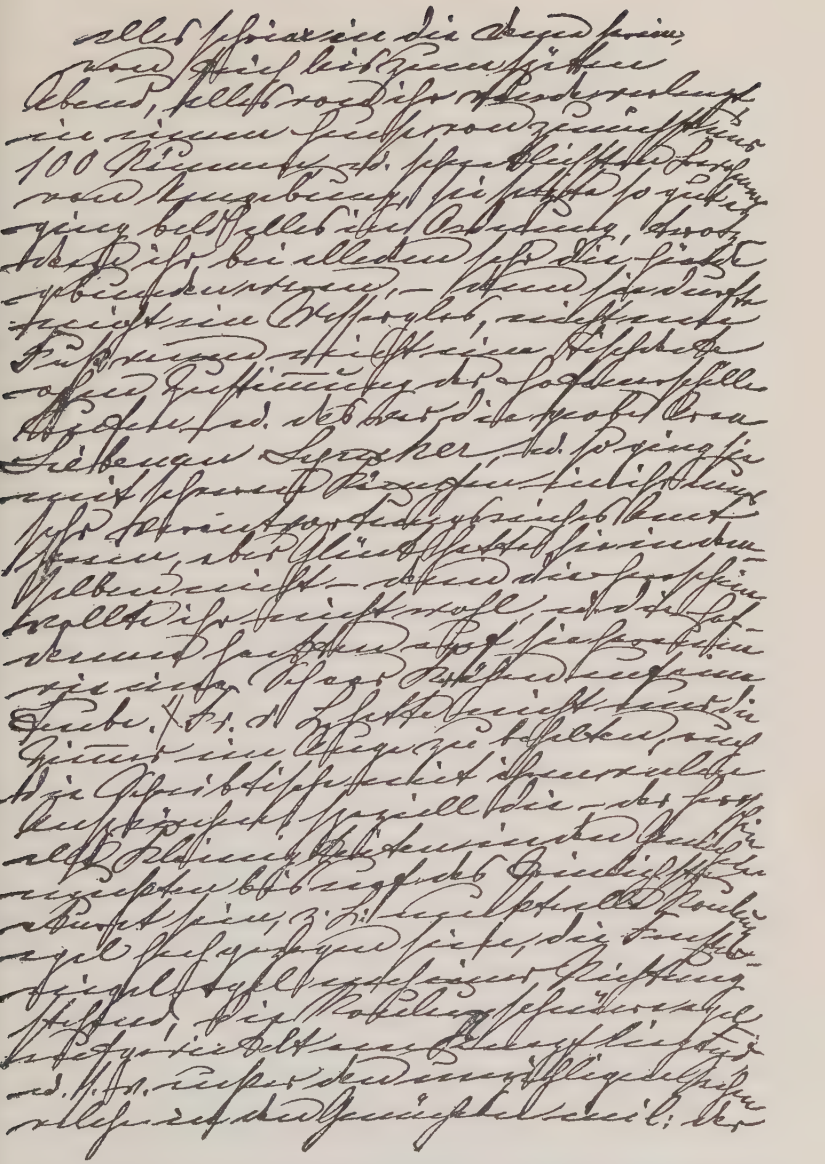

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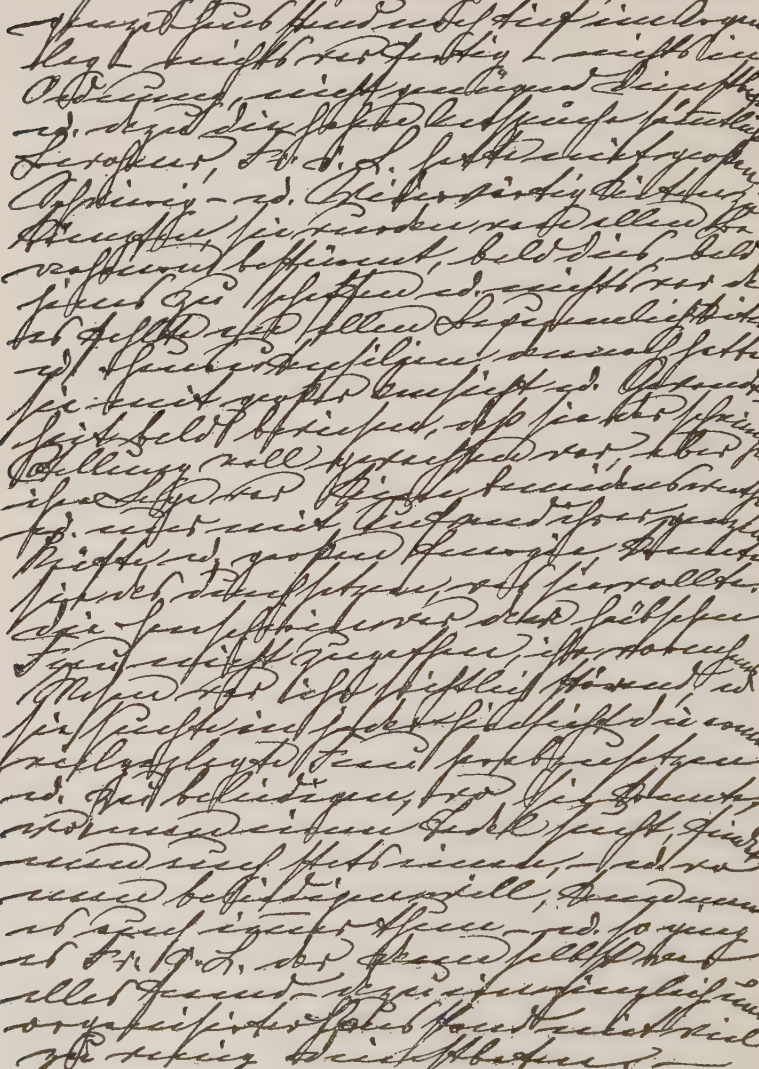

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THE HOHENZOLLERNS, THEIR KINDRED AND OTHER PERSONS PROMINENTLY MENTIONED IN THIS BOOK

FREDERICK I, first King of Prussia, 1701-1713. Before 1701 the Hohenzollerns were known as Prince-Electors of Brandenburg.

FREDERICK WILLIAM I, 1713-1740. Father of Frederick the Great.

FREDERICK II, the Great, 1740-1786. His best-known sister was the Margravine of Baireuth (died in 1757), authoress of the celebrated Memoirs. Frederick the Great was succeeded by his nephew.

FREDERICK WILLIAM II, 1786-1797. He was the notorious bigamist and debt-contractor. He was succeeded by his son.

FREDERICK WILLIAM III, 1797-1840. He was the husband of Queen Louise, a Princess of Strelitz (died in 1810), and the father of his successors.

FREDERICK WILLIAM IV, 1840-1861. This King became mad and died childless. A daughter of his brother William (died 1846), Princess Marie, married Maximilian II, King of Bavaria. Queen Marie (died 1889) had two sons,—Ludwig II, King of Bavaria, who died insane in 1886, and the present King Otto of Bavaria, who is also insane. Frederick William IV was succeeded by his brother.

WILLIAM I, King, 1861-1888. Became German Emperor in 1871. The Queen and Empress of William I was Augusta, Princess of Sachsen-Weimar, and a granddaughter (on her mother's side) of Czar Paul I, who died insane. William I had a daughter, Louise, now Grand Duchess of Baden, and was succeeded by his son.

FREDERICK III, March-June, 1888. His widowed Empress and Queen, styled Empress Frederick, is the oldest daughter of Queen Victoria of England, and was born in 1840. Her children are:

WILLIAM II, Emperor and King, since June, 1888; Charlotte, born 1860, Hereditary Princess of Sachsen-Meiningen; Prince Henry of Prussia, born 1862, married to Irene of Hesse, sister of the Czarina; Victoria, born 1866, Princess of Lippe; Sophie, born 1870, Crown Princess of Greece; Marguerite, born 1872, Princess Frederick Charles of Hesse-Cassel. William II was married to the late Auguste Victoria, born 1858, eldest daughter of Frederick, Duke of Schleswig-Holstein-Sonderburg-Augustenburg. The couple had seven children, six boys and one girl.

William, Crown Prince, born May, 1882, married to Cecilia, daughter of Grand Duchess Anastasia of Russia and the late Grand Duke of Mecklenburg-Schwerin, who died by his own hand. Cecilia is the sister of the Crown Princess of Denmark, who is afflicted with consumption, it is feared.

Issue: Prince Wilhelm, born 1906.

Prince Louis Ferdinand, born 1907.

Prince Eitel Frederick, born 1883, married to Sophie Charlotte, daughter of Grand Duke of Oldenburg.

Prince Adelbert, born 1884.

Prince August, born 1887, married to Princess Alexandra of Schleswig, his cousin.

The late Prince Oscar, born 1888, and Prince Joachim, born in 1890.

Princess Victoria Louise, born 1892, now Duchess of Brunswick.

Prince Frederick Leopold of Prussia is the Kaiser's cousin and brother-in-law, this Prince being married to Louise Sophie, Princess of Schleswig-Holstein, sister of Empress Auguste Victoria.

The Princely Houses of Hohenzollern (Hohenzollern-Hechingen and Hohenzollern-Sigmaringen), whose possessions were ceded to Prussia in 1849, are, like the royal line, descended from Rudolph, *Graf* von Zollern, but, professing the Catholic faith, have not intermarried with the royal line for several centuries. Members of the royal and princely lines call each other "cousins" by courtesy.

Charles Anton, Prince of Hohenzollern-Sigmaringen, is married to Antonie, Royal Princess of Portugal. His eldest son:

The Hereditary Prince William, born 1864, is married to Therese, Princess of the Deux-Siciles. Prince Charles Anton's second son:

Ferdinand, King of Roumania, married Princess Marie of Edinburgh. A third son:

Carl Anton, was married to Josephine, daughter of the *Comte* de Flanders.

The late Duke Günther of Schleswig-Holstein-Sonderburg-Augustenburg, brother of Empress Auguste Victoria. Born 1863. He was the husband of Princess Dorothy of Sachsen-Coburg-Kohary, daughter of Prince Philip, Austrian Field-Marshal, and Princess Louise, a daughter of King Leopold of Belgium; Princess Louise has of late been declared sane. The mother of Prince Philip was Princess Clémentine, daughter of the late Louis-Philippe of France. The Ex-Czar of Bulgaria is a younger brother of Prince Philip.

Prince Christian, the husband of Princess Helene of Great Britain, is an uncle of the Duke of Schleswig and of the late Empress Auguste Victoria.

Prince Christian's Brother, Frederick (died July 2, 1865), married Mary Lee, daughter of David Lee, of New York, November 30, 1864, after assuming the Austrian title of *Prinz* von Noer.

Princess von Noer, his widow, who, by this marriage, became the aunt of the German Empress, married, on April 14, 1874, General — later Field-Marshal — *Graf* von Waldersee, who died in 1904.

Duchess Adélaide of Schleswig-Holstein-Sonderburg-Augustenburg, mother of the German Empress, was a Princess of Hohenlohe-Langenburg, and a cousin of Prince Hohenlohe, the Chancellor of the German Empire. The Duchess died in 1900. Prince Hohenlohe died a year later.

Prince Eulenburg, a second class diplomat and William's favorite, raised to the princely estate and other honors, died 1921.

Count Godard Bentinck, owner of Castle Amerongen, Holland, who was persuaded by the Dutch Government to give William sanctuary after his flight from Spa.

The Bentincks are a Dutch family of some prominence as landed gentry. Some of them claim to come of the same stock as William through William the Silent. This family first gained prominence under William the Second of England, a Dutch Prince who achieved the English crown through his wife. The Right Honorable George W. E. Russel designates the Bentincks that came with William the Second to England as His Majesty's "Dutch Valets." "And their descendants now figure as Earls (Athlone) and Dukes (Portland) in the English peerage."

Von Hindenburg, German Field Marshal and General Stalking-Horse of the Fatherland, born 1837, first gained repute as a General in his campaign against Russians and Poles. Backed up the Kaiser when the latter issued his infamous order: "I command unrestricted U-Boat warfare to be prosecuted with every energy" (August 31, 1916). Hindenburg kept on prodding the Chancellor and Admiralty to intensify U-Boat warfare, December 8, 1916 being a specific date to that effect. He several times went to Berlin to remonstrate with the then Chancellor, demanding more intense U-Boat warfare. He was first to denounce England "for enemy propaganda," namely, for the distribution of leaflets and pamphlets showing the real state of affairs in Germany and the hopelessness of further resistance to the Allies.

Von Ludendorff, Hindenburg's Chief of Staff, likewise a U-Boat Enthusiast. Started his campaign for intense U-Boat warfare, Nov. 5, 1916. Prominent in forcing the Brest-Litovsk Peace on Russia. Promised Kaiser victory on Feb. 13, 1918.

Ludwig, King of Bavaria, chiefly known for having offered to take on William's job as Kaiser when Kaiserdom was on

its last legs. He was driven from the throne on Nov. 13, 1918, and still issues occasional wails about the poverty that is pinching his royal person.

RUPPRECHT, Crown Prince of Bavaria, who covered himself with dishonor in the Great War by his cruelty and inefficiency. The Allies caught several wagonloads of loot that Rupprecht tried to smuggle out of Belgium and France during the Armistice negotiations, but he got away with a lot of booty before that. Still he hopes that the Bavarians will recall him, and make him King, despite the indictments for theft and robbery that hang over him in Belgium and France. He is at the bottom of the monarchist intrigues in Bavaria. The other fifteen odd German kings and kinglets were driven from their thrones shortly before or during the week of the Armistice. Most of them are living in Switzerland, the Tyrol, etc. All got away with part of their fortune, and are now negotiating with their former subjects about their real estate which they couldn't take along.

RATHENAU, the murdered German minister of State, was a son of the "German Edison," who practically started the use of electricity in Germany. Rathenau's father, born in Berlin, 1838, was a doctor of philosophy, and a prominent engineer.

CHAPTER I

"IS IT A FINE BOY?"

VICTORIA

BUT one person, Major von Normann, of the First Guards, was present, when, on June 15, 1888, at noon scarcely an hour after Emperor Frederick had breathed his last, Kaiser Wilhelm II drew the above dispatch from his father's papers.

"What did His Majesty say on discovering the Queen's telegram?" I asked Normann at the late Emperor's funeral.

"Not a word; yet he turned a shade paler, while his left hand convulsively closed around the hilt of his saber."

Every time a Prussian king dies, a spirit of unspeakable savagery takes hold of his lawful successor.

The Empress Frederick, her daughters, the members of her court, her physician, friends and servants were prisoners for many hours, beginning at five minutes past eleven o'clock on June 15, 1888. Until her son and heir had concluded his investigations and made all arrangements he intended to effect, no living soul was allowed to leave Castle Friedrichskron; sentinels with loaded rifles stood over the telegraph operators to prevent communication with the outer world, and the telephone was similarly guarded.

That upon the heel of these measures the newly-made Kaiser invited Normann to attend him in his search for state papers and other documents, of which the one mentioned, while not the most valuable, was certainly not the least interesting, shows the extent of

his confidence in this man, then esteemed as a strict disciplinarian, but in no other way distinguished.

I would not like to assert that the imperial proclamations to the army and navy, dated June 15, 1888, were composed with von Normann's assistance while impatient crowds surrounded the palace, demanding news of the King whom they vaguely supposed to be dead;—but these papers are so full of barrack bravado and contempt for everything not military as to strongly suggest some such influence.

"Thus we belong to each other,—I and the army,—thus we were born for each other, and thus we will stick to each other forever, be there peace or storm, as God wills it."

And while the army was honored and exalted, the loyal taxpayers had to wait for the customary royal greeting and a word of information on the issues of the day, until the 18th of the month.

But to return to Queen Victoria's telegram.

It was dated January 28, 1859, twenty-four hours after the eldest son of Crown Prince and Crown Princess Frederick-William had seen the light.

William was born quite economically, a midwife receiving him, and a court physician, assisted by the then highly-reputed Berlin specialist for woman's diseases, the late Dr. Martin, looking gravely on after the manner of his kind.

In Germany, you must know, a doctor thinks is beneath himself to take the child, and is supposed to act only in case grave complications arise; nine times out of ten he contents himself by superintending the arrangements and in seeing that the sanitary laws are complied with in all minuteness; the midwife does the work.

In the case of the Crown Princess of Prussia, a Miss Stahl acted as midwife; at the time of this writing she was a motherly woman, and still continued her visits to the palace; so I often had occasion to talk with her about the great event in her life.

"Her poor Royal Highness," said the old woman, "was only two months past eighteen years, and very weak and nervous. You see, with her it was not an ordinary case of first motherhood; politics were mixed up in it to a frightful degree, and the poor young thing felt the fate of Europe trembling in her lap, for our King Frederick William IV was as crazy as a March hare, and twenty-one years had passed since a midwife was called to the Prince Regent's house to bring into the world little Louise, now Grand Duchess of Baden.

"Our work had been divided as follows. Dr. Martin was to have special care of Her Royal Highness, inasmuch as he was treating her for a nervous malady; the court physician had his ordinary duties, while I was commanded to take the child. But the moment the little one was born a despairing moan from the mother overthrew all these fine dispositions.

"'The Crown Princess is dying,' whispered the doctors, while working with blanched faces over Victoria's prostrate body. Of course, I had to abandon the child momentarily to help them, and when—the Crown Princess having revived after a while—I knelt down before the couch on which our heir rested, imagine my fright: he had not yet uttered a cry, nor did he move a muscle. 'Still-born, by Heaven!' I thought. A gesture brought Dr. Martin to my side, and together we labored over the newly-born, I do not know how long, exhausting successively every means ordained by medical books, or practiced in the nursery, to bring the child to life."

I will state here, that Miss Stahl was a very dignified woman, broad and short, and of an excessively grumpy disposition. Very seldom did she smile. The old dame recounted her story to this point, given always with the dignity becoming to a person of her worth; but, as she continued, her face broadened with merriment, and her famous basso resounded through the room with a break here and there that came very near a laugh.

"When everything had been done that in decency could be done," so ran her narrative, "I took that royal youngster under my left arm, and, grabbing a wet towel in my right hand, began to belabor him in good, homely fashion, though the doctors groaned and everybody in the room looked horrified.

"'To the devil with etiquette,' I thought, seeing their grimaces; 'this is a matter of life or death.' So I spanked away, now lighter, now harder, slap, slap, slap until—the cannons announcing the birth had half-finished their official quota of a hundred and one shots —until at last a faint cry broke from the young one's lips.

"He was alive! I had snatched our Prince from the grave for which he seemed destined. The rest was easy sailing; the doctors again had their innings and the simple midwife was shoved aside."

"But what about the deformed hand and arm?"

"That was discovered only the third or fourth day after," replied Miss Stahl; "you see, at first we were all so busy keeping life in the Prince, after I put it there, that no one thought of examining his limbs. Even when, on January 28, the late Crown Prince showed his son to his relatives, friends and the household no one observed that anything was wrong. But on the last, or the last but one day of the month, it was noticed that the child did not move his left arm; an investigation was made, and, in the course of it, the surgeons discovered that the elbow joint was dislocated. That is nothing serious in a healthy child. However, in the case of our Prince, the surrounding soft parts were so injured, and the muscles attached in such a condition, that no one dared attempt to set the bone then and there as should be done in all cases."

Miss Stahl concluded her remarks with the statement: "I am well aware that the present condition of the Kaiser's arm is attributed to a mistake made by the persons officiating at the birth; but," and saying

this, the old maid's face assumed its most determined look, "if that were not a falsehood, agreeable to the Kaiser, do you suppose for one moment that I should be in this palace now to cripple more Hohenzollerns?" Saying this Miss Stahl used to bring down her fist forcibly and concluded: "My opinion has always been that the child's left forearm was not properly made up by nature, as, indeed, his whole left side was weak, and is weak to this day.

"Everyone in the palace knows that though his walk is brisk, it is his ever-alert exertion that makes it so; if, at any time, the Kaiser ceased thinking of his shortcomings for only a moment, you would see his left leg drag. All his aches and pains too, locate in his left ear and the whole left side of his head. Now remember what I told you about the Crown Princess's condition. She was agitated by fears and depressed in spirits; great responsibilities weighed upon her mind. Is it to be wondered at that her child was affected?

"The mother, poor girl! transfused her nervous ailments into the child she was carrying, and all concentrated in its left side. That myself and the doctors were unable to prevent or foresee; besides we were, as stated, far too busy completing nature's handiwork by inflating and keeping the Prince's respiratory organs going, to test the inferior parts of his body separately. If, on the other hand, the Prince had been a lusty boy, the dislocated joint would, undoubtedly, have been promptly discovered and nothing would have stood in the way of its immediate correction."

So the chances are that Queen Victoria's telegram was answered in the affirmative.

In the babel of contradictory statements Miss Stahl's observations have the grateful ring of veracity. Surely, Miss Stahl was not to blame. If it were otherwise, would the Kaiser have tolerated her in the palace?

William was a hard master, and as for suffering in his service a person having blasted his life by cruel

neglect, that is as entirely out of the question as the idea I heard advanced off and on, that he is insensitive to his disablement.

That incubus, on the contrary, was forever in his thoughts, and his apparent unmindfulness of the fact a clever affectation. He wanted others to forget that he is a cripple, and therefore ignored his shortcomings.

But, with all that, he was sure to be found napping occasionally; I can very well imagine the Kaiser closing his hand nervously round the hilt of his saber as he read that tell-tale dispatch!

"Is it a fine boy?" Ah, his grandmother had good reason for feeling anxious about this infant in whose veins coursed the blood of the four Georges! It was that English consanguinity which he loathed and abhored, not the little woman who received him in her arms already tainted and marked for life.

That, despite his perfect understanding of the case, he allowed his historians to abuse Miss Stahl, was but an instance of royal ingratitude dictated by the same policy that, from the summer of 1887 to the close of the reign of one hundred days, branded certain of his father's physicians liars and incompetents.

In this particular instance it happened, however, that the biter was bitten; at the time indicated, Prince William would have gladly seen Mackenzie go to the devil; and the findings of the German colleagues, that Frederick III suffered from cancer, a malady said to exclude its victim from the throne, proclaimed from the housetops—but when he himself was King it was quite another matter. The world's eye, instead of compassionately regarding the sickroom at San Remo, was riveted upon the stationary or floating or rolling hospitals in which he dwelled as in a glass house—hence the "remaking" of history, the dissemination of historical untruth at all hazards!

But they must not be too replete with details. Thus I once heard the Kaiser, in conversation with his wife,

roundly abuse Hinzpeter for saying in his book: "The Prussian army never admitted a young man physically so little fit to become a brilliant and dashing cavalry officer as William."

The criticism was passed shortly after the appearance of Hinzpeter's "Kaiser William II, a Sketch from Life," and the Emperor, after warning his Augusta against letting the volume fall into the children's hands, meaning the elder boys, continued: "Our German philosophers never know where to stop; whether they write truths or lies, they are bound to compromise and expose their betters without ever realizing it."

His fateful left arm the Kaiser hugs closely to his body, allowing the hand which is not deformed, but puny, like a child's, to rest against his waist, or upon his hip, if on horseback. The German papers issued ballons d'essai from time to time to ascertain sentiment in respect to the introduction of a belt for army officers. As the Empress Eugenie reëstablished the crinoline in the sixties to hide her interesting condition, so William desires to change military dress to find a convenient resting place for his poor left hand and arm, which, being about six inches shorter than the right, would attach to a belt unostentatiously. But, alas; the General Staff feigned to regard those recurring proposals as maneuvers of army contractors, and treated them with fine scorn, so that William, unwilling to own his secret reason for the innovation sought for, had to go without relief.

Those were gloomy days in the palace when the pros and cons of opinion on the subject were read by the Emperor. They put him into the mood for smashing things, and his famous speech to the Brandenburgers was made under just such circumstances: "Those who will support me are heartily welcome, whoever they are, but those obstructing my policy I will smash to pieces."

As intimated, the fingers of the crippled hand are

movable, for although the head of the radius of the forearm does not set properly into the condyle of the humerus, the limb is not altogether inert. There is consequently no reason for doubting Major von Normann's assertion that the Kaiser clutched his sword with the left hand. I have seen him do the same thing quite often when angry. But while he can take hold of an article, he cannot for the life of him lift it. For instance, he holds the reins in his left hand, but is powerless to direct the horse except with his right or with his knees.

Without exaggeration it may be said that, next to the stricken man, the five imperial valets, always on duty to dress, undress, and reuniform their master, suffer most on account of this infirmity. One of them, Her Majesty's valet Nolte, made my maid the confidante of his troubles.

"We would not mind the work," I heard him say once, "would not care if the Emperor changed his uniform ten, instead of three or four times per day, it's the fear of injuring his lame hand that makes us nervous and gradually wears away our usefulness. And, besides, we must always be prepared to forestall the collapse of the All-highest when he balances himself on his left foot, as is his wont sometimes when he is in a hurry to put on a different pair of trousers." And, after thinking awhile, the man added: "If they would only introduce for all troops, horse, foot, and artillery, not excepting the navy, a uniform pair of pantaloons, one-half of our cares would be removed, but this endless variety is killing us."

William's right hand is massive and ugly in appearance, ugly too, when clasping that of a friend. Before I was presented to him, court marshal von Liebenau warned me against his mighty grip; but, though I went through the ordeal with teeth set, I could hardly suppress an outcry, which amused the Prince exceedingly.

How proud the Emperor used to be of his personal strength was evident from the fact that he promptly adopted the simile suggested to him several years ago, when a foreign correspondent likened his fist to the "terrible right" of the then champion of the world, John L. Sullivan, whereupon his sister of Meiningen, who adores strong men, remarked: "I hope Sullivan has not the bad taste to wear as many rings as my big brother."

This weakness is, however, to some extent excusable, as it is thus the Kaiser tries to hide a number of nasty moles which disfigure his hand. In this he partly succeeds, while in spots the glittering diamonds and rubies only tend to emphasize the blemishes.

I dare say very few people have a correct notion of the Emperor's height, for, as he is seldom seen without a helmet terminating in a point, the public is mystified, and even close observers are apt to be deceived. In the palace this question is never openly discussed, but I heard the Kaiserin tell overinquisitive Prince Eitel Fritz once or twice that his father measured five feet eight inches. That, I am sure, is a mistake; five feet five or six inches is the highest that, even Adjutant Count Moltke, who has a very sure eye in such matters, allows. He presents however a respectable enough figure, holding himself straight as an arrow.

The numerous newspaper persons who talk glibly about the Kaiser's "cancerous" ear trouble have, I imagine, information on the point that was inaccessible to those in daily attendance upon His Majesty, for whether the dread malady has settled in that organ or not, is an open question even with William's own physicians. Improbable it is not.

It was Queen Louise of Strelitz, "sharing with Marie Antoinette the sad pre-eminence of beauty and misfortune," who carried carcinoma into the Prussian camp; the English escaped the doom only because eco-

nomical George III preferred Caroline of Brunswick for his son, her dowry being larger by a few thousand thalers than the Mecklenburgers'.

The English Royal family escaped with a budget of vile scandal—the Prussians got the lesser dowry and the most awful disease to boot—hard luck or fate? After the Four Georges, England had a succession of honest, decent, peaceful kings.

All Queen Louise's portraits are remarkable for a scarf the lady invariably wears under her chin; even her oldest portraits and busts exhibited in the Berlin Hohenzollern Museum, no matter whether the Queen is in court dress or ordinarily gowned, have this distinction.

This ornamented scarf was worn to conceal the marks of an operation for swelling of the glands.

That is undoubtedly authentic, but it is also true that in this very spot the cancer that killed her, eventually developed. I have this information from descendants of old-time royal servants in the employ of the late Emperor William, Louise's last surviving son.

That Emperor Frederick perished of cancer of the throat even Dr. Mackenzie had to admit. Therefore, if one may say so without offense, it would be in the line of natural development if William II, supposing he inherited the malady, were attacked by it in the neighborhood of his throat. But it must not be forgotten that cancer is thought by some authorities to be untransmissible.

The only time that His Majesty's ear trouble was mentioned in the palace was, as far as I can remember, at the death of Henry XI of Reuss-Gera. The little one died of scarlet fever, we thought, and the Empress remarked: "I trust the Kaiser will not hear of the cause of death, for it always makes him uneasy."

"Why, has His Majesty not had scarlet fever?" I inquired.

"Of course," said the Kaiserin rather hesitatingly,

" and in its most malignant form, too. How could you live here several years without hearing of it? "

As Her Majesty's manner convinced me that it would not be agreeable to her to go into details, I curbed my curiosity until some time after I met Count Seckendorf, for many years chamberlain to the Empress Frederick.

" Your Ladyship did well not to press the point," he said, " for the Kaiser would be very angry if he heard of any such discussion. As a matter of fact, that scarlet-fever story is reserved for use in a contingency that has not yet arisen, I am happy to say."

" You put me on the rack, Count."

" Others are there already and dare not complain," replied the chamberlain, " on the rack of public opinion, of the most cold-blooded insinuation and of reproof direct.

" Do you remember," he continued, " when a certain august person snubbed Emperor Frederick's English physician because that gentleman had refused to take his cue from the seditious Bismarck and junker clique when reporting upon a disease that played such a part in a state tragedy, then on the boards? To-day, opposite views are trumps, and persons insisting that a specified malady involves the loss of the Crown of Prussia are publicly disowned and officially guillotined."

" I know, I know, but the scarlet fever story? "

" As I have had the honor of already intimating: if the condition of Frederick's successor becomes alarming at any time in consequence of his ear trouble, your Ladyship will see it in all the official papers."

And it will read after this style:

" When His Majesty, as a child was stricken with scarlet fever, his mother, the Empress Frederick, insisted upon treating the patient after a custom prevailing in some parts of England. The feverish boy was subjected many times daily to ice-cold ablutions,

while his body and bed linen were continually changed, in consequence of which an acute cold settled in the left ear, which has ever since irritated the youth and man."

"Then," concluded the Count, "will follow a learned treatise showing that the Kaiser has water, not tumors, on the brain."

There is, I repeat it, as yet no evidence to justify the worst suspicions regarding the Emperor's ear trouble, but the fact that the organ is regularly treated with antiseptics to arrest putrefaction indicates the presence of gangrenous inflammation. Quite frequently the Kaiser attends to this himself, and if he has had a particularly bad day, the physician on duty or the body physician operates on him. But in the course of years the Empress, likewise, has became an adept at bringing relief to her husband by these means; she also handles an apparatus for pumping air out of the sick ear, or clearing its passages by blowing air through them. This instrument, which is fitted with a long rubber tube and a spiral trumpet, hangs at the side of the bedstead in their Majesties' joint chamber and a duplicate is in the Kaiser's own toilet-room while a third forms part of the traveling equipage. The bed-rooms on the yacht Hohenzollern and on the imperial salon trains are also fitted with ear-pumps.

Harassed in this wise by maladies of the most serious character, the Emperor could not be blamed for taking excessive precautions against contagion. That he lives the greater part of the year in the inconveniently situated Neues Palais, which, moreover, will never be a thoroughly modern residence for reasons that will be explained in another chapter, is mainly due to its solitary position at the end of the town. At the Marble Palace, where the imperial couple used to spend the summer while waiting for William's patent of general and finally for the Crown, it was

quite different. There they had neighbors, one of them the Hereditary Prince of Schoenburg, of the Guard Hussars.

Coming down to breakfast one morning, the Kaiser learned that His Grace had died of diphtheria a few hours before.

"Diphtheria," cried William, turning a shade paler than is his wont in the morning,—"there seems to be something unhealthy in the air hereabouts. Order the chamberlain on duty that my things must be packed and sent to Berlin at once."

"But the residential quarters in the *Schloss* are far from finished," interposed Herr von Liebenau.

"Never mind, there will be some corner where I can sleep and eat without running the risk of infection." And seeing that the adjutant still waited, he added, anticipating a question which etiquette forbade to be asked: "All my things—I am going to move."

That settled, His Majesty quieted down, and when, shortly afterward, the Empress arrived, he simply said: "Dona, I am going to Berlin and this house will see me no more." Auguste Victoria was thunderstruck, but seeing the husband determined, she dared not question him. So their meal passed in silence while visions of domestic storms, of irreparable displeasure, even of a maitresse en titre, perhaps, chased through her Majesty's brain. And when half an hour later, I entered her room to ask if the valets might go to the bed-chamber and remove the Kaiser's clothes—I found my mistress in tears, bewailing a fate that was as yet a mystery.

"Do you know why the Kaiser is going?" she said. I could not understand it at first. "Of course," I replied, "His Majesty has heard of the death across the way, and, being so near the Schoenburgs, he is afraid that diphtheria might break out in the palace."

A sigh of relief escaped the imperial lady. She scarcely allowed me to finish. "Is the Hereditary

Prince dead?" she exclaimed, with almost a joyful ring in her voice. Then changing her attitude, she added: "Why have I not been informed of this? I might have been spared an unhappy half-hour, and, besides, I should have sent my condolences to Princess Lucie."

William was as good as his word; his state papers published that very day were dated "*Schloss*, Berlin," etc., and ever since the Marble Palace has ceased, as it were, to figure in contemporary history.

The Kaiser was right in surmising that his thousand-windowed palace in the capital would afford him lodgings of some sort; but as his own apartments, as well as the majority of the other suites, were undergoing alterations, he was obliged to make his quarters in the so-called von Kleist chambers, said to have been once inhabited by Princess Amalia's first lady-in-waiting, companion and confidante, the Baroness von Kleist. They are exceedingly beautiful, far more so than any of the gilded modern rooms that latter-day Berlin taste has furnished, yet at the same time lack even the most ordinary conveniences.

I was at the Meiningen Villa, in the Thiergarten, on some business of Her Majesty's, when the Princess brought the news. "I have just come from my big brother,"—she always speaks of the Kaiser thus,—"and what do you think? I found him installed in the Kleist apartments, which the White Lady is said to haunt."

"'I am glad Auguste had her baby' I told the Kaiser," continued Princess Charlotte, "for as you know, von Kleist's child born in this apartment was disfigured by a terrible birth-mark on the nose, the broom of 'The Sweeper.'"

"And what may that be, Your Royal Highness?"

"The White Lady, of course, who used to announce her coming by vigorously sweeping the corridors. On that account, Frederick the Great dubbed her 'the sweeper,' or, in his beloved French, La Balayeuse.

And that," continued the Princess with a loud laugh, as if some hilarious bon mot had just seen the light in her luminous brain,—" that was, after all, a fitting designation, for, sub rosa, the White Lady of the Hohenzollerns is no lady at all. I have just inspected her favorite abode, and, I assure you, there is neither a bath-tub nor a toilet to be found there."

Although the Empress knew of the objectionable features of her husband's temporary abode, she insisted upon following William within twice twenty-four hours. But the Emperor, pretending to be very busy with his speech for the opening of the Reichstag on November 22, would not see her until the following day. Now everybody knows that speeches from the throne are composed by the Chancellor—hence it was clear that William had some other reason for absenting himself. As a matter of fact, he had heard that Fraulein von Gersdorff, dame of the Court, was suffering from a sore throat, and though her quarters were not in the Marble Palace, but in the gentlewomen's pavilion, situated in the park, he evidently feared that Her Majesty might have come in contact with her. And not until he was reassured by myself, did he emerge from his seculsion.

After I had withdrawn, court marshal von Liebenau was summoned.

" No more cases of diphtheria in Potsdam, I hope? " said the Kaiser, in his most imperious style.

" None that I know of, Your Majesty."

" That you know of? My dear sir, that means either that you are out of touch with your department or that cases of illness are secreted. At any rate, you will be good enough to telegraph to the Marble Palace that all persons of the suite, or in the royal service, who show any signs of throat trouble must be removed to a hospital at once, without the slightest delay. These are my strictest orders."

One of the Empress's favorite wardrobewomen, Mrs.

Schnase, fell a victim to William's relentless anxiety on that occasion. Not being on duty for several days, she had remained in Potsdam, and, by the court physician's advice, had taken a perspiratory treatment to reduce a swelling of the glands, very common among certain classes in Germany, so that at 11 o'clock that night she was in the midst of a healthy sweat and sound sleep, when the major-domo awakened her to say that by "all-highest order" she must leave.

Protest being out of the question, a four-wheeler was secured, and the shivering patient was rolled off to the nearest hospital through the wintry streets.

"No room," reported the night-watch, when the driver summoned him.

"But she is one of Her Majesty's personal attendants."

Of course that made a difference, and, after some more discussion, Mrs. Schnase was given a cot in the pauper's ward, third class, next to one in which a poor creature was just receiving extreme unction.

The Queen's wardrobewoman was a healthy girl, and recovered not only from the horrors of her unusual experience, but likewise from an illness she caught while exposed to the deadly exhalations of the sorry environment forced upon her. After a month or so, she was back at the *Schloss*; but, daring to complain of the treatment that had been meted out to her, such biting sarcasm and contempt were heaped upon poor Schnase that she preferred to resign.

Assuredly, no one blamed the Kaiser for postponing maneuvers when cholera was raging. On such and similar occasions all royal servants were treated to unsugared tea as the standing beverage, which caused not a little indignation in the palace, the flunkies and maids insisting that the Emperor should make the tea palatable, if he forbade them to drink anything else.

The Empress, who faithfully copies all her hus-

band's fads, either because she admires them or because she fears his displeasure, is as bad as he. Her Majesty frequently causes the discharge of servants for neglecting to report some trifling sickness in the family; and members of the royal household not living in the castle can enjoy a holiday at any time by simply furnishing a doctor's certificate stating that somebody with whom they are domiciled in the city is ill. This applies to the Kaiser's adjutant-generals, as well as to the chamberlains, equerries, dames of the palace, chasseurs, coachmen, cooks, and scullions. More than once have I seen His Majesty abruptly start away from a person with whom he happened to be conversing at a reception or ball, leaving the unhappy lady or gentleman speechless and crushed, because of an innocent admission that a son or a daughter, or perhaps an uncle, had the measles or a cold. At the very mention of the fact the warlord fled like a lion hearing a cock crow.

Once I found Madame von Kotze in tears behind some shrub in the White Hall, while all around her dancing was going on. "What is the matter with Your Ladyship?" I inquired; "can I be of service to you?"

"No, thank you," she sobbed: "but to think that he said that to me!"

"Who is he, and what did he say?"

"The Kaiser, of course. When he heard that my boy was ill, he remarked, turning on his heel: 'How dare you come to my house under such circumstances?'"

That happened at a time when Madame von Kotze prided herself upon her particularly friendly relations with His Majesty.

But the most absurd instances of the Kaiser's mania for precaution is afforded by the case of little Henry of Reuss, already mentioned. As soon as his death

became known, William requested Her Majesty to have disinfected all the dresses that she had taken to Gera when attending the baptism of the Prince, several months before, although he knew at the time that His little Highness did not die of an infectious disease, as at first thought, but of a sort of scurvy.

CHAPTER II

My long years of service with the Kaiser as head of the Imperial Household have convinced me that his countless exhibitions of assumption, injustice, incivility, and brow-beating witnessed day after day, were not, as the saying is, second nature with him, but that, on the contrary, they reflected his true self, the real, unadulterated William.

Taking interest in no one, but himself, and holding society (so far as it did not directly contribute to his momentary comfort) as of no account, the master sent by Providence into the world, " ready booted and spurred to ride," used all men and women as beasts of burden.

An accident to my carriage once caused me to go into a Berlin restaurant not quite up to the standard of Court Society, and there I saw a man who ate just as the Kaiser eats. According to dress and general manner, this individual belonged to our landed gentry, —I subsequently learned that he owned several thousand acres in East Prussia.

His wife and two children, a boy of six or seven, and a girl of four or five, were with him at table. Yet he ordered dinner for one only—for himself—just as the Kaiser, if he was equipping a yacht, would order one life preserver,—the one he was going to wear.

The dinner started off with soup, one plateful. And father ate all he could ladle up. Then he shoved the plate across to his wife, who managed to secure another half-spoonful, and in her turn pushed it before the children, who sopped up what was left with bread.

There were similar proceedings on the Baron's part

—yes, indeed, he was a Prussian Baron—when the fish, roast, the vegetables, chicken and dessert came along. His Lordship ate his fill of every course, and the hungry three pairs of eyes, alternately fastened on his plate and mouth disturbed him no more than wasps do a bronze porker.

When he got through the menu, he called for toothpicks and "cognacs to settle his stomach,"—that his wife's and children's appetite was unsatisfied was nothing to him.

Nor would it be anything to the Kaiser, if he were in the Baron's shoes.

"The Kaiser used to boast that he was the biggest land owner in Prussia,—I am sure he is the biggest hog in Prussia or in the world," the late Queen Louise of Denmark once said to me.

When he went riding with his wife and some accident to her mount or harness delayed her Majesty on the road, William proceeded to his destination in the most unconcerned fashion, taking his gentlemen, gendarmes and grooms with him; neither did he lessen his pace to give his wife a chance to catch up with the party.

As long as twenty years ago, one of the Kaiser's own physicians spoke to me as follows:

"The Kaiser's speeches," he said, "portend an unmistakable craving for blood. His constant references to war, his incessant admonitions to the army that it must die for him, his abominable, oft-repeated summons to the soldiers to hold themselves in readiness to slaughter their parents, brothers, and sisters with gun, sabre, or lance, show that he is mad for blood.

"Woe to the nations if the Kaiser ever gets the chance to practice what he talks so earnestly, persistently and with such evident gusto.

"I predict that he will not stop at making war

where other great captains stopped, but that, on the contrary, he will carry war into civilian life. He doesn't hesitate to confess that he is forever thinking up new horrors of war and he will want to see these hellish concoctions and inventions at work destroying human life.

"If he succeeds in launching 'The Day' (and he will launch it as soon as he thinks the proposition a safe one for himself) women and children and old men will be fair game for him as well as the men of the armies and navies.

"And if he should encounter trouble at home, he will not hesitate to shed the blood of our own people in rivers. His reference to the killing of parents, mothers and sisters, which the soldiers must perform if he says the word, clearly foreshadows that."

Doubtless the telegrams which I used to read to the Empress, following in the wake of all imperial hunting excursions, and announcing the number of game killed, were very gratifying from a sportsman's standpoint; but, considering that William's reign yielded not a single act of pardon, or of human kindness, these records of blood, by William, are significant. It is one thing to measure strength and wits and the velocity of one's own, or one's horse's legs, with the beasts of the forest, as the late Theodore Roosevelt did, and another to butcher game, released from the pens, by the hundred as the Kaiser used to do.

Louis, the Mad King of Bavaria, was half a Hohenzollern and he, too, was forever a-thirst for blood.

During the last five or six years of his life, William's cousin used to vary monotony of inventing new building projects by studying minute accounts of battles and other gory happenings, and afterward, his brain aflame with visions of blood, he would fall upon any servant near to strangle, bite, cut off his

car, or otherwise maim him. The Bavarians are still paying pensions to royal servants who lost a nose, an eye, a leg or the use of other limbs, by their master's cruelty.

I heard the Emperor boast when he had killed his fifty-thousandth head of game: "When I think of the number of animals in my forests," he said, "I feel like Frederick the Great at Kolin when he shouted to his squadrons: 'Dogs, would ye live forever?' If a King cannot go to war, he must be content with practising in the forest. It keeps one in fighting trim, anyhow."

How the Emperor felt about signing death warrants is easy to judge. I know that he signed every one submitted to him, and that in all writs of execution issued since Emperor Frederick's demise, there occurred the phrase: "His Majesty having refused to interfere, the delinquent is to die by the sword," etc.

Like most selfish persons, William is hard-hearted, and never pardons anybody, save duelists or officers punished for exceeding their authority. He approves of insane big-headedness even in others. Previous to the William the First celebration, many thousand petitions arrived in the Kaiser's mail, but His Majesty being busy with the preparations for "Willehalm," refused even to see the extracts and recommendations which the Minister of Justice had prepared.

"I have no time for miscreants," he said to Lucanus: "Let a few men suffering for defending their honor, sword or pistol in hand, be picked out and I will set them free. As for the rest, they must take their medicine."

In the matter of William's claim of Divine inspiration, I might relate hundreds of anecdotes showing that he imagines he holds extraordinary relations with the Almighty. This, moreover, was proved by his tirades to his soldiers during the war in which he

condescendingly enlisted God as a private in the German army.

I recall how in conformity with his ideas of omnipotence, the Kaiser made his brother-in-law, Adolph, regent for the demented Prince of Lippe. "I gave him his Crown; woe to him who touches it," he told everybody. Nevertheless that cheap and nasty bauble was touched and Adolph got the sack!

I remember how on another occasion, after chasing from a parade to wrangle with a servant, His Majesty sat down to dedicate a number of Bibles for the new Berlin garrison church, inscribing them as follows:

"I will walk among you and will be your God and you shall be my people."

"Ye shall walk in all the ways which I have commanded you."

"Without me you can do nothing." He signed each sentence "Wilhelm, Imperator, Rex," and omitted quotation marks; as well as book, chapter and verse.

"They shall stand by themselves as expressions of my royal will," he said to Her Majesty.

That the Kaiser's egotism leads him to regard all state resources as his personal property even to the point of using state funds for his personal use, will presently be shown.

Everything is his. "My army," "my Heligoland," "my navy," "my port," "my fortress," "my funds" (meaning the state treasury), "my minister of war," "my chancellor," are expressions we hear as often as "my horse," "my boys," or "my speech." He always places an egotistical emphasis on the "my."

I recall one typical instance when he suddenly returned from his Northland trip. An officer whose name I have forgotten was invited to second breakfast. "Bully chap, this Lieutenant," said William to Her Majesty across the table, "but he came near ruining one of my torpedo-boats in trying to catch

up with my Hohenzollern on the way from Maeraak to Bergen. If he damages another of my vessels, he will have to pay for her."

There was much excitement in the Royal Houshold after the first "divine-appointment" speech at Coblenz, and Prince Henry's declaration of self-abasement: "I will carry forth the evangelium of Your Majesty's sacred person; I will preach it to those who want to hear it and also to those who don't want to hear it."

If this was not progressive big-headedness, it would have been idle mockery; yet no one acquainted with William and his ways will consider the alternative for a moment. On the contrary, it is a well-authenticated fact that His Majesty took Vespasian's deathbed jest—Methinks I am becoming a god—in bloody earnest from the very beginning of his reign.

In his every-day speech, as well as in public addresses, he claimed to be "all-seeing." Thus he warned the marines at Kiel to behave when visiting foreign countries, as his "eye was watching them, whether at home or abroad, by day or by night."

"More wonders," said one of the Emperor's sisters: "I suppose he will next invite the moon to sleep with him, like a certain Roman Emperor, who regarded himself a god."

The Kaiser's divine-appointment speech at Coblenz, was a fitting résumé of his claim as God's viceroy, repeated over and over again since the direful day of his assumption of power over the German people, when, in a "general order," he pronounced the astounding notion that he was "accountable for the army's honor and success to his grandfather," who was dead one hundred days.

That the "Hohenzollerns took their Crown from God's altar," and that "they are responsible to no one but the Almighty,"—how often did I hear this story in the Imperial Household from the lips of the

Kaiser, the Kaiserin, and all the Princes and kin—even the servants believed it and the mass of the German people. How easy would be its denial upon proofs smouldering in royal Prussian archieves!

The only really new thing in the early Coblenz utterances is the statement that the Kaiser's grandfather was "born a king, God's chosen instrument," while as a matter of fact the first William's kingship depended upon his predecessor's inability to have an heir.

The mad Frederick William died without issue, and "Grapeshot Billy," as William I was styled by his loving Prussians then, mounted the throne.

As for Prince Henry's famous Kiel speech (this is the same Prince Henry who came to America on a propaganda junket and was feted and dined by American society) the criticisms upbraiding the amiable but stupid Henry for what he said are as little justified as would be condemnation of the phonograph for a false note sung into one of Mr. Edison's machines by a dime-museum tenor.

I know His Royal Highness well, and this very knowledge convinces me that the expression "the evangelium of Your Majesty's sacred person" did not originate with him. "Sacred person," by the way, is a phrase that occurs frequently in the records of the descendants of the mad Juana of Spain, the Roman-German Emperors Charles V and Rudolph II. Indeed, the anecdote dealing with the latter says that he once admonished his physician, who was trying to locate the imperial patient's stomach under the quilt, by the thundering words: "Stop, there's the holy Roman belly."

To return to Prince Henry he has never originated anything. A careless, unlettered youth, he spent his first years of manhood as riotously as his slender allowance permitted. To save him from himself, he was married, at the age of twenty-six, to his cousin Irene,

an amiable woman, of domestic habits, but without an ounce of esprit. "Henry's father," the late Princess of Hohenlohe once said, "was just such a man, but fortunately he had a wife that prodded him on and forced him to acquire knowledge and assume at least a semblance of interest in literature and the fine arts."

German "Kultur" was the world's most colossal fraud. There was no culture in the Imperial family —the Hohenzollerns were and are gross, vulgar and depraved.

As to the relations between the royal brothers, they were never hearty and frequently strained. Princess Irene and my mistress disliked each other, and the men took their wives' part. As a subordinate officer, however, His Royal Highness always did his very utmost to please the Emperor.

While in the family circle the Kaiser was generally spoken of as "big brother," "big cousin," and so forth, Henry never failed to designate and address him as "Lord of the Sea," or "High Admiral." He consulted him about the merest details concernig his command, and professed to be thoroughly happy only when the Kaiser approved his conduct as a naval officer.

Yet the Naval General Staff steadfastly refused to give Prince Henry a command during the war, reducing him to the rank of an arm-chair admiral. Instead of directing battles, as he had threatened to do in pre-war days, Henry had to be content with repeating the stories of his spy-craft in Britain and the United States. Nowadays he is occasionally heard from, pleading for "big brother's babylike innocence."

Quite often I heard Prince Henry say to William: "Do not forget about that speech of mine for the Marine Club dinner," or, "If you cannot come" (to this or that opening, or naval exercise), "be sure to send me the speech. You can talk it over the tele-

phone and I will have a stenographer at the other end to take it down, word for word."

The Kaiser, too, was heard to say once or twice: "Now I shall have to telephone the speech Prince Henry is expected to deliver to-morrow. To be the intellectual giant of one's family has its drawbacks."

There lived not a man or woman at court who did not intuitively feel that Prince Henry's most famous speech was conceived and dictated by the person addressed from the opening words: "Exalted Emperor. Puissant King and Master, Illustrious Brother," to the closing phrase: "Our sublime, mighty, beloved Kaiser, King and Lord for all times, for ever and ever—hurrah, hurrah, hurrah!"

William wrote it word for word, as he did a dozen other tirades inflicted by his brother upon festive and official gatherings. I could name people of high standing who saw the manuscript.

In proclaiming his "mission" of chief arbiter of the world as an evangelium, as a revelation of the grace of God to fallen man through him, the anointed mediator, the Kaiser followed a practice established by most of the champions of big-headedness, past and present.

But reflecting on William's behavior after his fall, I am sure he was posing—posing as a "God" sometimes, as a mad-man at others.

When a week or ten days ago Countess Brockdorff, the ex-Kaiserin's chief servant returned from Holland, she told me that "Majesty" (she insisted upon according him the title) was "working at his defense." If in that document William is true to himself, there will be much rot about "divine advice" and "heavenly directions" tendered him "while on his devout knees."

And nothing excited William, Prince of poseurs, quite as much as the thought that, of his 70,000,000 of Germans, one or another refused to take him at the exaggerated valuation he put on himself.

Here follows a story told by General von Scholl, William's boon companion on his hunting trips.

"It happened in Rominton," said Scholl, "and the chase had come off to His Majesty's entire satisfaction, which means everybody else's complete disappointment. That is to say: By the chief forester's trickery all the game was driven before the Emperor's gun, while the rest of us got nothing but a few miserable hares or rabbits to massacre. Indeed, the Kaiser was so elated with his success as a pig sticker and deer butcher that he indulged in good-natured persiflage—a rare thing with him. Consequently all present had visions of plenty of champagne and imported cigars in the evening, for, as you know, when he has had a bad day's shooting he goes to bed as soon as he comes home, condemning his friends and guests to a diet of Berlin beer and evil smelling cabbage-leave cigars, the rankest in all Christendom.

"As we were walking toward the carriages, young Fuchs, the underhuntsman, came to me and whispered:

"'Does your Excellency advise me to ask His Majesty now?'

"'Go ahead, my boy,' I answered, 'if he doesn't grant it now, he never will.' Fuchs referred to a boon he desired, namely, a pardon for his old uncle undergoing imprisonment for insult to Majesty.

"His case was one of the rankest that ever came to my notice. Fuchs' relative, it seems, is a well-to-do Pomeranian farmer. During the maneuvers the King's horses trampled down the old man's corn. He sued the government and lost. When he threatened to appeal, the state's attorney tried to dissuade him, pointing out that he should feel honored rather, seeing that the Kaiser himself had commanded the troops that destroyed his crops.

"'The Kaiser,' said the old farmer savagely, 'can——.'

"At any rate," continued the General, "old Fuchs

simply used a figure of vulgar speech, as all of us are liable to do under provocation, but the public prosecutor hailed the incident as a means for bringing his ignoble carcass to 'all highest' notice. Forthwith he clapped the farmer in jail and had him tried for lese Majesty.

"Well, seeing that William was in such exceptionally good humor, the horizon ablaze with popping corks and fiddlesticks, the underhuntsman took heart and asked the Kaiser to pardon his old uncle.

"A gentleman of our party had his eye on William while Fuchs pleaded his case. He says the Emperor alternately turned red, white and green in the face when he answered the request.

"'I am astonished beyond words at your audacity. You ask for a boon—it's yours! I hereby promise you that I will forget the act of damnable hardihood you have been guilty of. You shall not be punished for asking the liberation of a traitor. Do you know,' he added, 'what they did with fellows like you in olden times? They might deem themselves lucky if they were not disemboweled or broken on the wheel.'

"After that the Kaiser paused and called to the rest of the company to listen. 'Let me state here, once and for all, that under certain conditions I may feel inclined to pardon even a common murderer, but to my mind the man who insults a crowned head is ten times worse than a murderer. Pardon him I never will.'

"'As to Fuchs' case, his relative is undergoing most inadequate punishment for the grossest of crimes, seeing that his vile tongue insulted God's anointed, the head of the German nation. May he rot in prison.'"

Some years ago when the Kaiser was riding in state through the streets of Berlin to attend the unveiling of one of the lifesized puppets lining the Avenue of Victory and giving palpitations of disgust to every lover of art, a poor old lady dropped an envelope into the royal carriage.

The adjutant, sitting to William's left, picked up the missive and, with a respectful bow, held it out in his hand not daring to presume whether the letter should be accepted or not.

The Kaiser grabbed the envelope with a scowl. Then, without reading even the address, flung it into the street and rubbed his gloved hand over his coat, as if anxious to remove a stain.

He cursed the old woman who had the " effrontery to assault him with her dirty letter " all the way down to the place of unveiling and, arrived there, summoned the Chief of Police.

" Fine order you keep," he roared at the official. " On the way here another hussy bombarded me with her filthy missives. Unfortunately, I kicked the rag out of the carriage, otherwise the old strumpet's name might have been ascertained for the prosecuting attorney."

I beg the reader's pardon for the language used, it's the " all-highest,"—duly expurgated.

I shall never forget the excitement created at the palace one day when one of the Kaiser's brutal orders to " shoot beggars on sight " almost cost the life of a Vanderbilt.

This was in the days before the war when American millionaires thought it quite respectable to visit the Kaiser—the days before his exposure as the arch-conspirator against decency and civilization.

Vanderbilt, it appeared, had driven to the castle over the royal highway, and the coach was about to enter one of the outer gates, when the sentinel stationed there, stopped the horses and demanded a card of admission.

" This is His Majesty's friend," said Jacques Hartog, Mr. Vanderbilt's courier, with an air of magnificent assurance, but the soldier only stared the harder.

" Your pass," repeated the infantryman.

" You don't understand things. This is Mr. Vander-

bilt, the American millionaire!" Hartog was pleading now.

As the word "American" struck the sentinel's long ears, he raised his gun, for his lieutenant had taught him that the United States is "one of those confounded republics," totally devoid of a king, or princes, or even a respectable standing army.

"Driver," he commanded, in his most pompous voice, and apparently unmindful of Hartog's very existence, "Driver, right about face, forward march! March, I say, and march, a third time, or I will shoot!"

The guardsman kept his gun leveled on the intruders until the coach vanished behind a cloud of fine white dust, and Heaven knows what would have happened if Hartog, who has a well-established reputation for pugnaciousness and obstinacy, had endeavored to run the blockade in order to please his rich patron; for these sentinels carried sharp cartridges, and if they fired—and they often did so on windy provocation—they fired to kill.

I cannot remember now whether the public honoring by the Emperor of a sentinel, who, while on duty, shot down some poor wretch, happened previously to Mr. Vanderbilt's unsuccessful attempt to visit the royal domain, or not. In that case, His Majesty called the offender to the front, shook him by the hand, and assured him of his royal grace, saying: "I am proud to commend you as an obedient and courageous soldier; such devotion as yours will always meet with my highest approval," or words to that effect.

But I do know that the incident was earnestly discussed in the imperial family and the castle about a month later, after the Emperor had delivered another famous speech at the swearing-in of the Potsdam recruits.

There are two versions of that address already mentioned in passing. The one which the majority of newspapers printed at the time reads:

"Children of my guard, you are now my soldiers,—mine, body and soul! You have sworn to obey all my commands; you must follow my rules and my advice without grumbling. It means that, from this day on, you must know but one enemy, and that enemy is my enemy. And if I command you some day to fire upon your own kith and kin, remember our oath!"

That version is terrible enough; but compared with the original draft of the speech, which I happen to have seen on the Kaiser's desk, the words spoken sound almost tame.

There it was, in William's tall, forcibly-rounded hand:

"Recruits! Remember that the German army must be as ready to fight enemies that arise in our midst, as foreign foes. To-day, disbelief and malcontentedness are rampant in the Fatherland to a heretofore unheard of degree; consequently, I may call upon you at any time to shoot down and strike to the ground your father and mother, sisters and brothers. My orders in that respect must be executed cheerfully and without grumbling like any other command I may issue. You must do your duty, no matter what your hearts' dictates are. And now go home and attend to your new duties."

I came upon this document quite accidentally, the Empress having ordered me to fetch from the desk in the Kaiser's study the calendar whereon His Majesty's engagements are registered, and the precious composition was written on blank spaces between the dates I had to examine.

"Monstrous!" I thought, reading over for the second time what William had the folly to indict and not wit enough to keep to himself; my heart trembled with anxiety for both country and Emperor. And to think that he memorized this murderous self-apotheosis within earshot of his wife, and with his innocent babies

sleeping above! And I—involuntary keeper of a state secret!

It troubled me a good deal during the night, but next morning's news quickly took the load off my shoulders, for Her Majesty remarked that the Kaiser was much pleased with the impression his speech had produced,—that of striking terror into the hearts of Socialists and others opposed to the imperial will.

"But does not Your Majesty fear misinterpretation on the part of overzealous men?" I asked; "the papers are filled with reports about brutalities in the army, and about the overbearing conduct of the military at all times. At the unveiling of the *Schloss* Fountain in Berlin, I even heard a rumor that Vanderbilt came near being shot while driving toward the Neues Palais."

That was a lighted matched into a powder-barrel! Her Majesty caused inquiries to be made at once, and meanwhile got all her ladies together to discuss the exigencies of the case. Of course, in their opinion, it would not matter much if an ordinary mortal is killed by a sentinel; but "the richest man in the world!"—that was another thing. Would, in such a contingency, "the United States declare war against Germany?"

The Countesses Bassewitz and Brockdorff wished it would, for they have relatives in the navy; but when I suggested that the Yankees might prefer to take it out of German commerce, Her Majesty became thoughtful.

"I have heard the Kaiser remark that Vanderbilt could cripple the finances of the entire universe," she said; "if that sentinel had shot him, his brothers and heirs might drive our good Miquel to suicide."

I can add but little to the statements already made concerning the Kaiser's health. His ear trouble is increasing and Her Majesty, who is fond of fresh air as was Queen Victoria, was much concerned about the foul atmosphere that gathered constantly in the Kaiser's study and dressing-room, or wherever he stayed in-

doors for any length of time. The belief that this local disease is a cancerous growth received a new impetus from the fact that the late Grand Duke of Baden's sufferings were diagnosed as cancer. His Royal Highness was the husband of a Prussian Princess, granddaughter of Queen Louise and sister of the late Frederick III, the Kaiser's sire. Both Queen Louise and Frederick died of cancer, and the physicians hold that the Grand Duchess Louise transmitted the curse to her husband, as another Prussian Princess, more directly, carried insanity into the House of Wittelsbach.

The Kaiser is an epileptic, but as warnings, in the shape of certain peculiar sensations, usually preceded his spells, it has been possible to restrict the knowledge of his unroyal affliction to his family circle, the highest officials and to members of the household.

As long ago as the midsummer of 1891, the Kaiser was found in his dressing-room at the Neues Palais, lying unconscious across a fallen arm-chair, which he had knocked down in toppling over. The chambermaid Amelia discovered her master when, receiving no answer to repeated knocks she entered the room in pursuit of her duties. You can imagine the hubbub that ensued. The girl, not satisfied with alarming the men servants, brought all the women, from Empress to scullion, to the scene by her lamentations.

At first the cry went forth that his Majesty had been murdered; simultaneously the theory of suicide was advanced, and when, finally, the doctors arrived, they found two of the wardrobemen engaged in pouring cognac down the Kaiser's throat.

Cognac of the twenty-five marks a bottle brand is always kept in the Emperor's private rooms to liven him up when he feels faint. The servants thought they were doing the correct thing and were inconsolable on hearing of the danger involved by such heroic treatment. However, as at the same time they had opened the Kaiser's locked teeth and pulled his tongue into

place, they had done something to relieve the poor man.

The other attack happened at the Berlin *Schloss*, also in the Kaiser's own chamber and in the presence of his wardrobemen. The attending physical circumstances were the same, and so was, curiously enough, the explanation to the household by court marshal Eulenburg.

" His Majesty has a peculiar way of throwing himself backward into an armchair," he said. " He throws himself into a chair with full force, and it is not to be wondered at that a chair breaks down under him occasionally."

The Emperor himself, after each stroke, talked at table of the d—d worm-eaten chairs that were considered good enough to be placed in his chamber. The idea that any court marshal would assign infirm pieces of furniture to William-the-Spendthrift is almost too preposterous for mention.

I am told the Kaiser's malady has, of late, taken a more aggravated form, the premonitory sensations having ceased. The falling-sickness comes upon him suddenly and, as in the two instances noted, he lapses into insensibility without a moment's notice when grand mal takes hold of him. He is, therefore, in more imminent danger, on account of the falls peculiar to the disease, than before, and as a precautionary measure all porcelain vases with cut flowers were long ago removed from his rooms.

CHAPTER III

I HAVE no personal end in view with these revelations; no excuses are offered for this narrative of court life in Germany as I have seen it, other than to give the world the truth about the Hohenzollerns.

If in part it borders on the unexpected, by upsetting established notions, and again explains certain things which have become history from a standpoint totally different from the one popularly accepted and believed, let the reader remember that truth is stranger than fiction, and that history is but a lie, to borrow a phrase from the Duchess of Orleans, the sister-in-law of Louis XV, who exclaimed, on hearing the false report that Frederick the Great was marching upon Versailles after Rossbach: "So much the better, I shall at last see a king."

A lady of title and position, after losing my fortune, I accepted their Majesties' command to join the ranks of a retinue already noted for high-sounding names, and by royal warrant was appointed chief of the imperial household, or lady major-domo.

For many years I was what "the first gentleman of Europe" cleverly characterized "a maid aiding the languor of an easy party in a royal box at the play; one that goes to the theater, to concerts and oratorios gratis, and has physicians without fees and medicine without druggists' bills."

As Maitresse de Maison I had a ticklish post, that bound me closely to their Majesties' heels, inasmuch as the care of the "all-highest" persons was given into my hands.

The German court from the day I entered it was and always has been vulgar, coarse and as I shall later

prove—depraved. It had no semblance of "Kultur"; it was in fact ignorant, superficial and, "behind the scenes," most disgusting. The Kaiser is neither a reader nor a student, but a mere pretender of knowledge.

After a quarrel with William, the Princess of Meiningen once called her big brother "the great charlatan" and his cronies the "little ones whom he continuously outtricks."

Love of *risque* stories is a Hohenzollern failing. Contemporary writers agree that Frederick the Great shunned woman's society because it obliged him to bridle his tongue and observe the ordinary decencies of life; the "romantic" Frederick William IV was a trafficker in classical and modern pornographic literature, and the present Kaiser's grossness of speech was notorious enough to find an echo in the imperial nursery.

Apropos of this, a funny thing happened some years ago when Major von Falkenhayn, then governor of the older princes, complained to His Majesty that his first-born constantly used a very nasty word against his brothers and playmates.

"The devil!" cried the Kaiser, "he must be broken of that; but where did the little —— (the very nasty phrase complained of) hear that expression?"

Probably from his imperial and royal father. It will be remembered that poor "Nickey," the late Czar of Russia, complained in the early part of the Great War that William often shocked him by his nasty tongue. At one time when he was quarrelling with his quondam ally, the King of Bulgaria, he applied to him an epithet, occasionally, very occasionally, heard in the slums of great towns, I understand—and this filthy William Hohenzollern shouted it all over the banqueting hall.

So far "Nickey," but didn't "Ferdi" get even with the Kaiser?

I have nothing to support my theory, but I do think

that the "Bulgarski" got well paid for deserting William at the critical moment. It will come out sooner or later. In the meanwhile I want to put this, my most personal belief, on record.

William will talk for weeks about a vulgar experience, and neither his friends nor the dignitaries of state with whom he came in contact were spared the recital, including disgusting details. Indeed, three-quarters of the time when the public imagined William to be wrestling with problems of the day he sat on the billiard table, with his adjutants and the chief members of his military and civil households standing around smoking cigarettes and telling stories and listening to tales affecting personages of the court and society here and abroad.

And while this lascivious tattle was carried on Her Majesty lounged, perchance, in the Cup Room, magnificently gowned, knitting shapeless little woolen caps for orphan asylums, and talking religion and cheap charity schemes.

What contrasts! What dissimulation! I often thought to myself when being in attendance upon Her Majesty, the echo of sneering allusions to a friend's or acquaintance's wife or daughter wafted past me through the door of the billiard-room, left ajar by some lackey with his tablet, or opened by the Kaiserin's order that she may feast her eyes on the husband she loved so well.

The head of the nation, whose "unceasing industry" was the talk of the continent, vainly trying to kill time with buffoonery; the sovereign lady, "mother of the poor," working penny caps in a gown the cost of which would keep for ten years the poor boy or girl for whom the kitted thing is intended, and assure the little one a splendid education.

It was a saying at court: "Give the Kaiser an up-to-date rendering of the 'Merry Jests of King Louis XI,' and you will receive a standing invitation to accom-

pany him on his Northland trips; tell him something more indelicate than the 'Tattle of the Nuns of Poissy,' and he will book you for an ambassadorship;" and that is no exaggeration, as will be seen in what I shall later reveal about William's boon companions and their scandalous escapades.

The Kaiser's inclination for the ludicrous even intruded itself into "business of state"; for, as he considers his ministers but royal servants of high degree, so were court functions regarded by him as quasi affairs of government.

The house regulations provided that a list of invited persons be presented to the Empress and her ladies early every morning, so that they could dress accordingly. My experience showed that it would never do to wear anything but one's second-best bib and tucker at table, whether the bulletin announced a brace of nobodies or half a dozen ministers and ambassadors for at the last moment His Majesty might bring in the Chancellor, some sovereign or prince traveling incognito, or a whole host of fine-looking young officers whom he came across on one of his rides or outings or who happened to report at the palace about meal-time.

His habit of issuing these invitations, however, did not necessarily imply that William was a hospitable man; maybe he did not care a snap of his fingers for the individuals dragged to the gilded chair of ennui by "all-highest command"; he invited these gentlemen merely because they promised diversion, either by reason of their personality, or by information or gossip in their possession—anything to escape the monotony of daily surroundings, was the Kaiser's continuous prayer. If his wife and her ladies were embarrassed, so much the worse for them.

"Three weeks' table duty suffice to ruin anyone's digestion," was a saying at court, and, it might be added, was enough to spoil one's savoir-vivre too. In the fashionable restaurant at the Hotel de Rome, in

Berlin a little old man was pointed out to me by a friend from the provinces, "I am astonished," said my escort, "that they allow so ill-mannered a person in this place."

"You mean the white-haired and beribboned gentleman in the corner?"

"The same, who swings his toothpick so furiously."

"Why, it is Count ——, chamberlain to the Empress."

"Really! And who may be the gentleman with him who combs his long mutton-chop whiskers over his soup-plate?"

"That is Minister von Puttkamer."

"But they behave like pigs. Do they learn that at the royal table?"

"Nonsense; in the presence of their Majesties they are under such awful restraint, that, off duty, they let themselves loose, like boys escaped from boarding-school drink out of their saucers and wipe their mouths on their sleeves."

The guests and attendants at table are in gala or demi toilet, most of the younger officers being as tightly corseted as the ladies, while all the men wear the narrowest of uniforms, that scarcely allow them to breathe. Add to this feeling of physical distress the overpowering anxiety of preparing for the supreme moment when the Kaiser or the Kaiserin shall address one of them, or give the signal for laughter, and it will be obvious at once that taking potluck with Prussian royalty had its drawbacks.

But the most miserable person of the glittering assemblage was she who wears the costliest gown, the biggest diamonds. At meal-time the Kaiser chose to make a display of his conversational powers or wit and Auguste Victoria knew only too well that she cannot rival the one, and that the other is out of her reach. So she sat quietly, addressing little nothings to her ladies in an undertone from time to time, while pain-

fully alert, that none of His Majesty's jokes and inuendoes escape her.

William seldom spoke to his wife directly except to say that he liked or disliked her costume; and if she asked questions, he answered in a tone that forbade further conversation; quite frequently he did not reply at all, turning his left ear toward the Empress and affecting not to hear her.

At such moments, when pride and love raged in her bosom, we all felt deeply for Her Majesty. Sometimes she appeared ready to cry in the face of everybody; but the woman in her forever gave way to the Queen, and so she swallowed her mortification, sat still and smiled, her little gray eyes languidly fixed on the husband so eager to shine as a humorist.

Ah, the sorry attempts at jesting that guests at the royal board must endure! By reeling off any absurdity that came into his head, the Kaiser tried to "put life into the company" as he called it, and his remarks, usually addressed to one of the adjutants, provoked peals of laughter as a matter of course, as soon as the author gave the cue for hilarity by accentuating the end of his speech with a roar.

"Why is my big brother like 'Life' in a foreign country?" asked Prince Henry of a small circle of sympathizing relatives during a visit of our court in Kiel.

All the highnesses, royal and otherwise, gave it up.

"Because," quoth Henry, "he is always sure of raising a laugh." "Life" has a reputation of being funny, and, even where English is not understood, is applauded indiscriminately.

The New York periodical was the universal favorite with German royality. I remember the Kaiser's wrath when in September, 1914, the first number of "Life," making disrespectful reference to his august Majesty, strayed onto his library table. William was surprised out of his boots.

"I command the postmaster general," he shouted into the phone.

And when that dignitary respectfully responded, he demanded to know whether the post office department was asleep. "You had the effrontery to pass that dirty rag 'Life' through my mails," he bawled, "if that happens again it will mean your resignation."

And William hung up the receiver with a bang.

Supper at court was no more entertaining than the midday meal: the same stiff-necked formality, the same strained after-effect; the Kaiser endeavoring to be his own merry-Andrew, the rest of the company dull for the most part.

As for the Empress, she remained as impassive as ever, smiling in her subdued manner; only her corsage was considerably lower, and she wore an extra handful or two of jewels. An extreme decollete is Her Majesty's strong point; but, despite allurements of toilet and the assiduity with which her charms were set off, William could not be induced to remain in his wife's presence a minute longer than courtesy demanded.

As soon as coffee was served, the Emperor took himself off with his men friends and attendants and, as stated, repaired to the billiard-room, where he sat for hours, with one leg on the table, swinging the other to and fro, while his adjutants and guests entertained him with imitations of music-hall and circus people, small talk, and droll stories of the coarsest grain, reeking with the fumes of the barrack-mess.

That in the feverish hunt after amusements and excitement, family life at the German court, of which the contemporary press made so much, was a delusion, goes without saying, though, to accuse William of neglecting his Frau, in the ordinary sense of the word, would, perhaps, be unjust, for he kept up appearances in a general way, and I have reasons to believe that he loved his wife. Yet he had a knack of forgetting her

very existence whenever he thought he was better off alone.

And his fixed idea of self-sufficiency grew stronger and stronger with him as his egotism developed into egomania.

With all that, however, he was not an unkind husband, albeit his actions often implied lack of gentleness and generosity. It was his boundless love of self that claimed ascendency in his every action, no matter whether it affected the best friend he had in the world or his worst enemy.

As in those awful days of San Remo, when he claimed, as representative of the old Emperor, precedence over his afflicted mother on the way to the village church, so he used his Emperorship as a club to intimidate all depending upon him into a state of utter submissiveness. And this was going on so long that the Empress, on her part, had become used to it.

As to the children, they were there for dynastic purposes, to learn and to grow up; what more can be required? Her Majesty's complaint, that they hardly saw their father, was true; seldom, if ever, did the youngsters appear at table, and the reports of their governor as to conduct and progress in learning had to suffice, time for meeting not being available.

The Kaiser's idea of women was that they were wholly for purposes of amusement or propagation, and children for the purpose of maintaining family lineages or the population of the Empire—this was German "Kultur"!

The Kaiser's up-stairs study, a large, lofty room, was the rostrum from which the Empire and the whole world in general were addressed (who knows not the dateline: "Given at the Neues Palais?"). Near the fireplace was the Emperor's writing-table, a big, clumsy, walnut affair with machine-turned feet, and trimmings such as may be found in any well-regulated household in Germany. The Berliner calls this piece of titled

inelegancy "Diplomat's Desk," for what special reason I do not know. The top was usually covered with marine views, charcoal sketches and photographs of beautiful women, framed and unframed.

As is well known, both their Majesties had a passion for photography, which William was wont to call "a royal art" until he heard that the Duke of Marlborough, "who married a daughter of the republic for her money" practiced it; but, while her Majesty collected photographs indiscriminately, the Kaiser showed a decided partiality for those of charming women.

True, he honored men in the service of the court of government, or of social renown, quite frequently by requests for pictures; but on receiving them he invariably shut them away "where the flies cannot get at them," while portraits of handsome princesses and other fair ones who made an impression upon the imperial mind were everywhere in William's rooms—figures large and small, in all sorts of costumes, or even distinguished by an absence of such; plain pictures, silver prints, in colors or painted over; personal gifts, inscribed with sweet sentiments or the output of art stores.

Among the likenesses regularly found on the Emperor's writing-table, no matter whether he was at home or in his private car, or visiting with relatives and friends, was one of the Duchess of ——, remarkable for the fact that her Imperial Highness was uncovered except for a necklace of pear-shaped pearls. For this portrait the Kaiser professed a special liking, because, he said, it reminded him of a certain masterpiece representing Letitia's great-grand-aunt, the Empress Josephine.

"Don't you think it does?" he once, after a lengthy dissertation on the point, asked his wife, who cordially detests her cousin.

Other picture favorites of his included the daughter of a Prussian general. This young lady figured oc-

casionally in living pictures arranged by members of the court society, and, with her rich Titian hair, big blue eyes and chaste figure, was perhaps, the most beautiful German girl of the period.

A continuous source of amusement to the Kaiser were the minute accounts of his daily labors in the vineyards of statecraft, and of almost any other vocation imaginable, which he ordered published in books, magazines, pamphlets and newspapers with a minuteness of detail and conceived in a know-all vein of assurance, interlarded with " deepest " and " highest " admiration, that make them soul-stirring and " pathetic," he thought.

These descriptions of what is indescribable (for the greater part of the labors ascribed to the Kaiser were creations of the author's fancies) commenced to pour in on us almost with the beginning of his reign, when in a speech to the municipal council of Berlin he protested against the imputation that he traveled around for the fun of the thing.

" I have placed my health and all my bodily resources in jeopardy to serve the cause of peace and to promote the Fatherland's prosperity by visiting allies and friends in all parts of the world," he cried. And German opinion, always ready to be corrected, at once changed its sing-song of the Kaiser-on-the-tramp into that of the Kaiser-at-work.

After that it became the fashion among sycophants to pronounce William a perpetuum mobile of useful activity.

I will not weary the reader by attempting a detailed account of the Kaiser's employments,—of when he designed to get up and when he " graciously " retired, worked at governing and governed the work of others; listened to reports and asserted himself; fenced, rode, drove and what not,—that life which was but a " whirligig of hard labor for the good of the people and for the peace of Europe," or else an attempt to square accounts with the Supreme Creator.

The Kaiser imagined he was going through one of these high-minded performances continuously, whether he drew plans for an impossible battleship, or part of the civil list; whether he risked his bones in a Troika driven by a German, who knew no more about handling three Asiatic stallions than I do about cutting diamonds, or read a speech from the throne—all was fish in the net of imperial aggrandizement thrown out at random to entwine loyal minds at home and abroad,—people who thought it an honor to be dazzled by princes, and "winked quite honestly at royal radiance."

The underlying idea of these efforts was to keep up the myth of incessant service rendered to the Crown, a martyrdom of work broken occasionally by a stroke of genius, such as writing a novel, painting a picture, composing music or inventing this, that or the other thing.

William was not made of the clay of the philosopher of Sans Souci, nor of that of the lion of St. Helena. He was not even clever at masquerading in the lion's skin. At school and at college the highest degree attained by him was "satisfactory"—another pupil, being no more satisfactory, would have been called incompetent.

His attempt at handling large masses of troops, in the presence of the Emperor of Austria and the King of Saxony, led to disaster, while Count Waldersee preferred to resign as chief of the general staff rather than permit the Emperor to meddle with his department and periodically discharge batteries of ignorance at him, as the General told Bismarck during a visit to Friedrichsruhe shortly after assuming command of the Ninth Corps.

Count Seckendorf furnished an amusing skit on William's tale of woe about "risking health and life to save the Fatherland."

"Enduring fatigues, he calls it," said the count; "to be bathed and groomed; breakfast; take a canter on a horse previously tired out, and so trained as to

give the rider not the least trouble; breakfast again, ride to a parade, or, while stretching on a lounge, listen to reports carefully worded so that they may be agreeable to the imperial digestion; before luncheon, some pleasant conversation with officers from all parts of the country; meal diversified by clever men and women, drummed together for the purpose of disporting their wit and retailing the latest gossip; after luncheon, a cold rub-down and an hour's absolute rest in a comfortable bed; dressed anew by smart servants; meal number four,—coffee and cakes,—a drive or lawn-tennis; a minister or a general makes his report, after dinner, theater or reception; finally, meal number five; bed.

"Or instead of so unexciting an afternoon, an impromptu hunting trip, a cruise on the Havel lakes, and, on extraordinary occasions, a state council, a visit to the Chancellor to air one's opinion, or to a rehearsal to catechise actor and actresses. Is that work?"

Not for the master who, mapping out a twelve, fourteen or eighteen hours' program enjoyed every minute of it while his servants drudged and all are servants in William's eye. That his strength might never fail him he partook of five meals per day, while "servants" not admitted to the imperial table must be content, very frequently, to dine off the vapors from the dishes borne past them.

"My indefatigability," "my prowess," were perpetual themes with the Kaiser.

As a further example of William's "Kultur," let me give one incident which may throw some light on William as a composer, his alleged love of music, as a poet, as a painter and as what his sister, Princess of Meiningen, called him—"a charlatan."

On October 24, 1894, the Kaiser's "Song to Ægir," was performed at a matinée in the Royal Opera House, which the Prince and Princess of Wied attended, together with their Majesties.

The Prince, then a man in the fifties, belonged to one of the proudest families in Europe, was the brother of the Queen of Rumania and an uncle of the Queen of Holland; yet every time the big audience waxed enthusiastic over the Kaiser's alleged masterpiece, this old man with silvery hair rose respectfully from his seat and bowed low before his nephew, keeping up the farce all through the performance without William in any way restraining him.

And this reminds me, by way of contrast of a conversation at which I was present some time previous to that public exhibition of senile adulation.

"Tell me, honestly, who helped his Majesty compose this frightful 'Song to Ægir?'"

"State secret. Your Royal Highness must certainly excuse me this time," and Adjutant Count Moltke looked up helplessly into the beautiful eyes of the Emperor's sister.

"As my big brother remarked the other day to the Burgomaster of Thorn: 'I can be very disagreeable if need be,'" said the Princess of Meiningen. "Now, Major, answer and pat, I command you."

"His Majesty composed the song."

"That is the official version, I know; what I am interested in is, to find out how he did it."

"At the piano, Your Royal Highness."

"Since when does His Majesty play?"

"He has the finest ear for music, that your Royal Highness will not deny. He struck the keys with one finger, and, if you promise not to give me away, your humble servant had the honor of putting the all-highest composition on paper."

"Thanks, awfully," said the Princess, and, turning to her lady-in-waiting, von Ramin, later Madame von Brochen, she added: "Not a word of this to anybody; our dear Moltke must not be punished for amusing us." And once more addressing the adjutant she continued with her usual mocking laugh: "I will now tell you how

it was done, you innocent. The Emperor was strumming the piano with one finger, when a certain blonde giant about your size stepped behind him, and, striking the keys, gave life to a musical composition he, the giant, had half-perfected in his head. The air pleased His Majesty, and he added a note here and there. And as the thing progressed, my big brother said: 'This would be an excellent accompaniment to Eulenburg's northern legend. Call him at once.' When the troubador appeared, all three of you set to work on this frightful piece of clap-trap, and, as you correctly reported, the honor of putting the composition on paper fell to you as the only capable musician of the trio,—the composition, I said, not the all-highest one."

This lively colloquy occurred a few days after the much-disputed air had been performed at a concert in honor of a deputation from the British Royal Dragoons visiting Berlin to congratulate their new chief, the Kaiser, and it gives the true story of the birth of that song. For the orchestration, Professor Albert Becker was responsible and got the Hohenzollern Cross in acknowledgment.

Besides clearing up the "Ægir" mystery, the above affords an interesting illustration of William's mode of work. He has talents, undoubtedly, but they are creative only in giving work to others, the product passing for his own in the end. As Moltke and Philip Eulenburg are the real authors of "his" "Song to Ægir," so Professor Knackfuss composed his cartoons, though being credited only with their technical execution. The late Court Chaplain Frommel used to write the imperial sermons delivered with so much eclat on the deck of the yacht *Hohenzollern;* officers of the military house-Saltzmann painted his landscapes and marine views.
hold prepared William's lectures, and the artist Karl

To shield their master from the accusation of frittering away his time in useless dilettantism, the German official press printed, every little while, historic reviews

purporting to show that the Hohenzollerns of all ages have been among the most gifted of mortals—authors, poets, musicians, artists.

Especially to Frederick William the First's cleverness as a painter, constant reference is made, although anyone acquainted with the history of the Prussian court might be aware of the untenableness of that claim. The father of the great Frederick wrote his royal signature on a good many canvases, it is true, but few of the pictures attributed to his brush were really his. As a matter of fact, instead of being the Apelles of the Brandenburg dynasty, its first noted painter, he started the fashion of counterfeiting, of which his son became past-master. His scheme was to employ poor artists by the year, and to let them paint daubs of all sizes and subjects. These he adorned with his name, adding a little coloring here and there into the bargain, and sold at high prices to flatterers and enemies, as the case might be, for in those days the modes of punishment at the disposal of a Majesty were manifold and curious.

A cunning knave this second King of Prussia, and his august example was not entirely lost upon his successors. But there is still another point to be noticed. William's daily program precludes in itself the undertaking of serious work on the Kaiser's part. Having forever one foot in the stirrup and planning new diversions before another is fairly under way, how should this alleged jack-of-all-trades find time for the literary, musical, and artistic pursuits credited to him?

There are geniuses who accomplish a prodigious amount of work by turning night into day; but, with all my experience in the royal household, I am at a loss to account for the newspaper statements that used to set forth that now and again the Kaiser had spent half, or three-quarters of the night, studying state papers or working out great projects in the interest of public concern.

In the first place, his constitutional aversion to sit-

ting still for a considerable time was against night work, even supposing that the day's or evening's amusements had not tired out William so completely as to make it impossible for him to give the necessary attention to important business.

Still, to defend myself against accusations of inaccuracy I had better quote certain notes from my diary.

Of three hundred and sixty-five days, the Kaiser was away from his official residence one hundred and ninety-nine, devoting himself to the army on twenty-seven days and employing sixteen days in duties of representation. One hundred and fifty-six days were consumed by hunting-trips, sea-journeys and visiting.

Now to the one hundred and sixty-six days when he was "officially" at home. Seventy-seven of them were pleasantly passed in shooting, boating, yachting or other outdoor exercise in the neighborhood of Potsdam or Berlin, while of the remaining eighty-nine days, each twenty-four hours were diversified by banquets, corsos, concerts, theatrical performances; by receptions, reviews or speechmakings. The number of miles covered by the Kaiser during the period mentioned, amounted to three-quarters of the earth's circumference.

A dozen members of our court society were discussing the above at a musicale given by the widow of the Red Prince in her palace on Leipziger Platz, when Princess Aribert of Anhalt, a sprightly young English-woman, remarked: "Granted the Kaiser cannot ply the fourteen trades and arts imputed by some historians to Peter the Great, no one will gainsay that he is a brilliant speaker and an adept in military science."

"Of his rhetorical qualities," replied our hostess, "foreigners, even those understanding German as well as you, my dear, can hardly form a proper estimate. For myself, I think the Kaiser's speeches neither distinguished for elegance of diction or for originality. The most offensive sameness pervades them, and not infrequently they abound in misstatements."

I could have furnished Her Royal Highness at least one very good reason for the faults pointed out; these speeches are of the Kaiser's own making.

Only very rarely would he take the trouble to jot down minutes of the speeches he intends to make. Moreover, I doubt that he thinks it necessary to do so. A person who, relying merely upon his musical ear, and without having had instruction in singing, or being able to play an instrument, gets up in a stately gathering to sing an aria abounding in difficult passages, is certainly the quintessence of self-reliance.

That is exactly what William did at Castle Schlitz, with Count Goertz as accompanist, the boldness of the exploit before an audience distinguished for artistic accomplishments being none the less pronounced on account of the fact that the air was alleged to be his own composition.

Of the performance, Countess Goertz spoke to the Empress in most enthusiastic terms; but, to quote William, "her Ladyship is a woman so beautiful that to expect sense from her would be hoggish."

That on the same occasion His Majesty acquitted himself quite well of conducting the band, a military one, which had been thoroughly drilled in performing the "Song to Ægir," is not astonishing. With his ear for music and a little attention to technique, it would have been difficult, indeed, to lead so finished an organization into blunders, when every man knew that his slightest mistake would be followed by professional disgrace.

Some months after the exploit in Schlitz, His Majesty and a great number of friends were hunting near Castle Leizlingen, the band of the Saltzwedel Lancers furnishing the table-music. At that time, the official papers reported, "the Kaiser again proved his eminent musical talent by conducting the grand march from 'Aida.'" One of the party, General von Haenisch, however, tells me that this is not true. The

Kaiser took up the baton to lead the "Hohenfriedberger" and Count Moltke's "Rider's March," compositions of quite a different caliber to Verdi's great work, and which, besides, the band could have played in the dark and with eyes shut.

To return to the observations of Princess Frederick Charles: There is, among the numberless speeches and sayings reported of the Kaiser, not one pithy remark that has become a by-word in every-day speech or in letters. In all this dreary wilderness of imperial verbosity, we find no mot that outlived the hour of its birth, and the Kaiser's observations, as a general thing, are too commonplace and insignificant even to permit dressing up.

Other important persons are made to say clever things, often without their knowledge or consent, but William's friends and admirers scour his speeches vainly for a peg upon which to hang some witticism, or some flash of genius that might eventually be credited to the royal tattler.

The Emperor, who claims to be a student of the older French literature, probably got far enough in Rivarol to learn that "it is an immense advantage to have never said anything." The sentence following, namely, "but one should not abuse it," he must have overlooked, for he certainly did abuse the privilege. And in a twofold manner, too; he kept on saying nothing, and habitually misquoted history.

I have not kept a minute account of the missives, but, if memory serves me right, I should say that fully one-third of the mysterious anonymous letters that caused the great court scandal of which I will speak presently, contained caustic references to the Kaiser's assassination of historical facts.

So was, during a Christmas season, her Majesty's holiday humor seriously disturbed by an epistle hauling the Kaiser over the coals for a speech he had made in Kiel, at the swearing-in of recruits, and which referred

to the battle of Vercella (101 B.C.) as having been fought " between Germans and Romans " (mistake No. 1), and wherein " the Romans were vanquished " (mistake No. 2) " by the enemy's superior valor " (mistake No. 3).

After pointing out a half-dozen other errors, the writer of the anonymous note suggested that Augusta Victoria buy her husband a small reference-library; at the same time the correspondent thanked " William-the-Sudden " for having garbled history in order to pay homage to the arms of ancient France, " for," said this writer, " the barbaric tribe which opposed the Romans at Vercella were not Germans, but Cimbri or Gauls; that is, they belonged to the same family as the French of to-day."

Similar anonymous notes emptied the vials of sarcasm over the composer of the " Song to Ægir," which latter, it was pointed out, was not a god of the sea, but a miserable landlubber, who never had so much as a sniff of the ocean.

The Empress used to turn over these epistles to her husband, with an aching heart; but if she, like most of her friends, hoped that these missives would make William more careful, her expectations were not realized, for the Kaiser went bravely on blundering and exposing himself to ridicule.

Much as one might be inclined to look up this sort of coxcombry as a harmless affectation liable to wear off in the course of time, its real purpose is too glaring to be overlooked; his parading with plumes borrowed and stolen, his many bids for popular applause through newspaper adulation smacking of the methods of the press agent, William's public lecturing and preaching, his coquetting with the stage and letters,—all was but part of a system carefully pieced together to uphold the pretence of imperial omnipotence and omni-knowledge.

CHAPTER IV

It was a motley array of weaklings I found in the imperial household. The Kaiser shunned strong characters—they annoyed him while, in the presence of weaklings, he always felt the strong man himself.

I think the man whom I despised most from the day I entered the palace was Major von Liebenau, the court marshal, who for many years exercised a strange influence over the Kaiser.

I had seen royalty born, and had helped to distribute its garter on the wedding eve; I had stood at its death bed, and in royal company had enjoyed the good things of this world—in fact the greater part of my life had been spent at court; but where formerly I was welcomed as a friend and companion, I was now—such are the vicissitudes of life—merely one of a few hundred attendants. Was, then, Madame de Cornuel's adage, that no great man is perfect in his valet's eyes, to be brought home to me with terrible force right at the beginning?

"These people," I argued to myself, "are like sponges, absorbing the atmosphere of their environment, being at the same time too careful of their own interests to assume an attitude out of countenance with that of their betters."

The voice of court-marshal von Liebenau, now my superior, woke me from the reverie into which I had dropped.

"My dear Baroness," said the courtier, rising from his armchair, "take a bit of friendly advice before you select your suite of rooms among the apartments set aside for Her Majesty's ladies. If you want to succeed at our court, leave all thoughts of independence, all inborn notions of truthfulness and common, every-day

honesty, outside the palace gate, divest yourself of personality—all individualism save that of our masters' is odious—be an automaton pure and simple, smile upon her Majesty's whims, do not be ruffled by a superior's insult, and if at any time you must fly into a rage, retaliate upon those under you."

I was about to speak, to protest, but the court marshal anticipated me.

"I know what you want to say," he cried; "you think it mean and contemptible to let the innocent suffer for their betters' wrongs, and I agree with you. But we all do it, must do it; it is a sort of lightning-rod for one's ill-temper.

"Au revoir. Once more—be an automaton."

Liebenau was a man after William's own heart, his double in more than one respect. A lieutenant in the First Guards, he attracted the then Prince William's attention by the same characteristics that drew him to the younger Bismarck.

When William was Crown Prince studying statecraft in the foreign office under Count Herbert's tutelage, Liebenau got his real foothold in the princely menage established in the Marble Palace, which he ruled with a high hand. At the same time the heir to the crown was revelling in the charms of divers queens of tragedy, comedy and the ballet, attached to the royal play and opera houses, taking his cue from Count Herbert who never spoke of the other sex except in the coarsest of terms.

William's young wife saw herself reduced to the position of a "Holstein," good enough to fill a succession of royal cribs, ranging in size like the pipes of an organ. She was rigidly excluded from her husband's world of ideas and ambitions, which, perhaps, she did not comprehend, but, for all that, endorsed with touching sincerity. These were indeed unhappy days for the royal Augusta Victoria.

How often she has poured the story of her morti-

fication and disappointment into mine and the Countess Brockdorff's ears! Poor Princess! She had been brought up to the sober truth that royal women must get used to dividing their husband with others and bowed her blonde head under the historic bane not with the worst of grace. What rent her heart was William's cynical way of regarding woman's supreme duty and highest honor—motherhood.

"I don't want to be looked upon as a means for propagating the royal race exclusively," she cried once. "But under Count Bismarck's teachings, the Prince seems to have forgotten that I possess any womanly qualities besides that of child-bearing."

Fearful lest Her Royal Highness's hatred of Count Herbert might lead her to rash remarks in the presence of the old Emperor and her husband with both of whom young Bismarck was persona grata, I tried to intervene by suggesting that he was not altogether a bad man, having fought with distinction in the French war.

"Yes, yes, I heard plenty about that," interrupted Augusta Victoria, impatiently; "he is said to have received three bullets, and since then has made three of our sex extremely miserable—that person in Bonn, who caused the duel; the poor Princess Carolath, and myself."

The fall of the Bismarcks is a matter of history, but that the present Empress played a decisive part in it, few, if any, writers have a notion of. It is true, Augusta Victoria dreaded her husband's parting with the Prince, but feared even more the constant intimate relations between William and Herbert Bismarck; and while she once succeeded in striking his name from the list of guests on the Northland trip, giving his place to her uncle, Herbert was invited to accompany the Kaiser to England and on the Oriental tour, mainly, it was rumored, on account of his boast that, as secretary of foreign affairs, he would find ways and means to open the doors of the Sultan's harem to His Majesty.

Whether Herbert Bismarck made such promises I cannot say; enough that my mistress believed he did, and persuaded Countess Waldersee (the former Miss Lee of New York) to believe it also. Her Excellency was a most pious woman, and Herbert necessarily figured in her inventory of proscribed persons with a big "H," as Baron von Mirbach put it.

How the two august ladies worked for the downfall of the hated man; a few pin-thrusts here, an allusion to the old Chancellor's ambition to set up a throne beside the throne there. "Crown Prince Herbert," "Woman-beater Herbert," "Son of his father," and what not. And in the end: "Down goes the mantle, and the Prince must follow."

Of the old Chancellor, guilty of two unpardonable sins, that of possessing undoubted popularity, far exceeding the Emperor's, and a hearty disinclination to accommodate himself, after years of supreme rule, to the part William intended for him—of this "obstreperous servant" the Kaiser had been tired for a long time, and the separation enforced in March, 1890, was nothing if not premeditated. Indeed, the Kaiser's inviolable intention to dismiss the "old man," as he called him, was expressed as far back as October, 1889, to Czar Alexander of Russia.

However, the Kaiser had no notion whatever of getting rid of Count Herbert Bismarck too. Only the gross coercion used against the "old man" on the one hand, and on the other the fact that Bismarck, when making the historic appeal to the Empress Frederick—"his last stand"—learned that the petticoat camarilla had worked against his son as diligently as the Kaiser's increasing querulousness and thirst for independence—this aggravating circumstance alone forced resignation upon the Count.

"And what will you do?" asked William of the Secretary of State.

"Follow my father," answered Herbert.

Liebenau, though more the Kaiser's alter ego than Herbert, was never on terms of intimacy with William, who selected him as major-domo when, after his marriage, his household was established, for the same reason that, in 1897, prompted his nomination of a general of cavalry for the position of Postmaster General, *viz.:* because he was a good driller, a disciplinarian of the sort that does his master's bidding without the slightest thought for the feelings of others. An official reputed to carry out orders unflinchingly and, if need be, unscrupulously, was always apt to attract a man of William's arbitrary temperament.

There was another point speaking in Liebenau's favor. At first William's income was a little over $50,000 per year, a mere bagatelle, considering the pretensions of both master and mistress; but the court marshal, coming from a family in which the Prussian saying, "Golden collar—stomach hollow," has had practical demonstration through generations of uniformed, spurred, and sabered vaingloriousness and misery, promised to carry on the stewardship that would have been moribund in most other hands, to a nicety—promised it, and kept his promise.

He did more. During the first two or three years, at least, he managed to set aside for the personal use of the Prince considerable funds. Later, debts were contracted; they were not of Liebenau's making, though.

But, while ingratiating himself with William, and, in fact, with the entire royal family—this "mounted beggar," as the old Empress Augusta called him, showed his natural inclination for the noble art of browbeating.

Loyalty itself (I doubt whether a more loquacious reciter of courtly phrases and of assurances of respect and humility ever addressed a royal lady), nothing seemed to give this intriguer more satisfaction than to refuse, on the plea of expenditure, whatever the future

Empress expressed a wish for in the way of food, or petty luxury, not on the daily list.

"Think of it," she said to me one morning, "this Liebenau refused me a glass of Madeira for second breakfast, claiming his budget would not permit such extravagance when we are alone, there being hardly enough to set the table as it ought to be set when the Prince himself is present.

"'My appropriation scarcely warrants the purchase of expensive wines for His Royal Highness's own consumption,' he had the impudence to tell me. I nearly choked with anger."

When William became Crown Prince, Liebenau retained his position at the head of the largely augmented household; but, on assuming the throne, the Kaiser kept him on the anxious bench many weeks before granting him the rank and title of Chief Grand Marshal of the Court.

Liebenau established a reign of terror at the palace, as William had done in some departments of government; but, while the Kaiser waited before promulgating his boast and threat: "There is but one master—none other will I tolerate," his Marshal proceeded at once to demonstrate that he was the real King's lieutenant, vested with absolute power from whose decisions no appeal could be had. And that was no idle talk, for in domestic affairs the Kaiser listened to no one but him.

Thus, with a master the very reverse of polite, accessible or generous, and a submaster trying to outdo the other in arbitrariness and contemptuous treatment of all beneath him in rank or social station, our court was in a wretched plight, and the Empress's ladies especially suffered from this barrack régime.

Our private apartments in the *Schloss* at that time left much to wish for in a sanitary sense, as indeed they do now; but whenever Countess von Brockdorff,

or any of us, ventured to suggest the slightest improvement to the court marshal, that functionary cut short our complaints in the rudest manner possible. And not only that: even the Empress's orders were treated much in the same insolent fashion, so the whole court was kept in a perpetual turmoil.

The male dignitaries and officials of the imperial household fared no better than ourselves under the King's lieutenant, and disgraceful rows and minor disturbances were of almost daily occurrence, while the servants, besides being subjected to the coarsest treatment, had to endure threats of corporal punishment.

These browbeatings and bullyings continued uninterrupted and unpunished until the omnipotent Pooh-Bah happened to run amuck of General von Wittich, chief of royal headquarters, who, being offered insolence, threw down his gloves, and shaking his fist in the court marshal's face cried: "If you were not so far beneath me, I would whip you like the cur you are."

Von Wittich reported the incident to the Emperor, and William, who was unwilling to lose the General, concluded that Liebenau needed some of his own medicine. So he sent for him.

"I will assume that your quarrelsomeness is the outcome of overwork and nervous excitement," he said, forestalling explanations; "you will leave this evening for a six-weeks' holiday." Then he turned on his heel, while the court marshal stood half-dazed.

But six weeks do not last an eternity and at the end of his vacation Liebenau seemed to be as much of a favorite as ever. In fact, the Emperor appeared to welcome back with much satisfaction his double, from whose resemblance to his own self he had recoiled at a moment of anger.

And if Liebenau had not double-crossed the "all-highest" himself, he might have continued to defy the Empress and cudgel the court for a quarter of a century longer.

But he happened to do the Kaiser out of an ovation at the very moment when William craved and needed popular applause more than usual, and this is what happened to our tormentor!

"A word with you," said William looking his nastiest at the court marshal on his return from the trip, "this affair of Elbing (the place where William missed the 'hurrahs') has opened my eyes to your character and capabilities. I can't use a person who sets my people against God's anointed! You have antagonized her Majesty, the court, the aristocracy, my people, you have antagonized *me*. You are sacked, do you hear what I say, sacked."

"Roared at and kicked out like a dog-snatcher," whined the scared bully as he went out with bowed head.

To complete the triumvirate of ambition, insolence and libertinage, let me now introduce the Kaiser's most infamous friend, Philip Eulenburg.

Here we have a chartered libertine, whom the Kaiser raised from the position of an obscure Councilor of Legation to the greatest honors in the land, whom he enriched at the taxpayers' expense by various grants and, finally, made practical overseer of the whole German diplomatic corps.

William erected his own statue in Eulenburg's palace yard, conferred upon him the title of Prince and appointed him Member of the House of Lords and Privy Councilor.

A wing of Liebenberg Castle, communicating with "Phili's" apartments, was set aside for William's own imperial use—in short, he showered him, up to the very day of the Harden exposures, with every favor in his power.

Eulenburg was Third Secretary of Legation in Munich when they first met at Castle Schlobitten, the seat of Count, later Prince, Richard Dohna, who subsequently stigmatized the part he unwittingly played by

this chance introduction as "the great folly of his life, never to be sufficiently atoned for."

Less than a month after the meeting at Schlobitten, the unknown diplomat's appointment as Minister to Oldenburg was gazetted and two years later—Eulenburg having in the meantime attended the Kaiser on his Northland trip—we find him ambassador at royal courts, Stuttgart and Munich. In 1902 he was the Kaiser's representative in Vienna when not dancing attendance upon William in Berlin, at his hunting boxes or on his travels.

Eulenburg had little besides his salary to bless himself with during these early years, for Liebenberg, bought with his wife's money, yielded no revenue to speak of.

Eulenburg was kept poor and made poorer year by year by the Kaiser's flattering, but expensive visits. Like the typical Prussian official, he never had money of his own.

Add to this the expensive habits of court life, and the terrible infliction of having to feed seven hungry youngsters ("so devoted a royalist would never think of having fewer children, or more, than William," it was said), and you get a vague notion of things as they were in the Eulenburg household.

The promotion to the Munich post, together with the excessive allowance for moving, helped Eulenburg momentarily; but until the appointment to Vienna put considerable funds into his pockets, he never breathed freely.

Eulenburg was in the very throes of financial despair, as everybody at court knew. The Kaiser alone affected to be ignorant of his friend's trials, and often remarked: "I like nothing better than spending a few days at Liebenberg; the only trouble is, the place is so terribly old-fashioned," words that were repeated to the Minister by the royal house officials and occasional guests over and over again.

So frequent and so annoying were these references, that the Prince of Meiningen once said: "He will be driven to the Jew, if you keep on."

"Keep on—what?" retorted the Emperor angrily.

"Throwing his poverty up to him."

"Do you see him anywhere about?" said the Kaiser sarcastically.

"No," replied the Princess Charlotte, "for a wonder, there is no Eulenburg present, but the gossips-in-ordinary are," and her Royal Highness, raising one of her fair shoulders, pointed to General von Hahnke and von Plessen.

Eulenburg, however, did not go to the usurer, but selected the safer though thorny, road—he borrowed from a relative, his sister-in-law, wife of Count Eulenburg, Major in the Guard Dragoons. This lady, blessed with a considerable fortune in her own right, allowed herself to be persuaded to provide not only funds for the building and furnishing of an imperial suite of rooms at Count Philli's seat, but in addition, lent her brother-in-law a snug sum, the interest of which was to be exclusively applied to the entertainment of His Majesty.

And on condition that she be invited to meet His Majesty twice per year, Madam relinquished all claims for interest.

To this extraordinary display of respectful devotion on the part of the Eulenburg family, his Majesty was not insensible: not only was Count Philli, who never in his life had distinguished himself as a diplomat, promoted beyond the dreams of hardened office-seekerdom, but gratitude led William to unwonted extravagance.

To improve the outlook from the imperial suite of rooms at Liebenberg, he presented his host with a stone fountain "to be erected in the farmyard opposite his Majesty's windows," leaving to His Excellency the cost of setting up and finding water. Countess Eulenburg, she of the loose purse, who was good at figures, told

Countess Brockdorff that the expense of rearing the ornament exceeded by far the sculptor's and stonecutter's bills.

But while Eulenburg, like the rest of his Majesty's impecunious but useful friends, never "saw the color of his money," he did taste much of the sweetness said to reside in what Pitt called "the Power behind the throne." Because he learned to bedizen himself with the Kaiser's weaknesses and small vices, to acquiesce in his (William's) lack of principles; because he had it in his heart to gloss over the Kaiser's faults and to affect admiration for all his doing and sayings, one of the chief regalisms was turned over to his tender care —the making and unmaking of the diplomatic corps.

"Courtiers," said the Kaiser, "are like the clothes I wear: necessities. They have their fixed places in my circle; men as Eulenburg, on the other hand, are butter on the bread of our pleasure; as for the rest, one can get along without negligee attire, but it is mighty uncomfortable in the long run."

When Eulenburg inherited the domain of Hertefeld in Rhineland, with an income of quite 100,000 marks per year ($25,000), the Kaiser created him successively Baron of Hertefeld, Count von Sandels and Prince, with the appellation of Serene Highness.

And, after the late Baron Nathan Rothschild—all the "round table" called him "Nathie"—made the new Highness heir to a couple of millions of francs, the Kaiser added the title of "Right Honorable Privy Councilor to the Prussian Crown" and sent "Philli" to the House of Lords as his special representative.

Prince "Philli" is the father of two daughters, Alexandrine and Victoria. His eldest son, Frederick, married a rich Viennese girl and has one daughter. There are two younger sons, Siegwart and Charles.

Their sister Augusta ran away from home with her father's secretary, Edmund Jaroljmek, a Pole.

After the first Harden trial, Countess Augusta con-

gratulated the editor on his victory over her father, while Jaroljmek, to balance accounts, declared emphatically that the rumors stamping him a victim of his father-in-law's libertinage had no foundation in fact —which is uplifting, to say the least.

To finish "Philli's" family: His daughter-in-law, nee Marie Baroness de Meinholf, refused to ever set foot in Liebenberg again and abandoned the construction of the grand castle arising, half finished, in the shadow of the princely chateau.

To establish, in cold type, the relationship between Kaiser Wilhelm and the person adandoned by his children, common decency forbids. That it continued for twenty-years the scandalum magnatum of Europe's courts, despite the protests and anathemas of three Chancelors—suffices to characterize the friendship between the head of the German Empire and the most notorious libertine in Europe.

Prince Bismarck used to say: "There have been some clever warriors among the Perverse—Alcibiades, Caesar, Peter the Great, and many Turkish Sultans, whose names I forgot—but never a diplomat of distinction."

And both old Bismarck and Herbert made it their business to tell the Emperor repeatedly that Eulenburg was unfit company for him, stating their reasons in the plainest language.

To cap the climax the elder Bismarck added: "One glance of Eulenburg's eyes is enough to spoil the most elaborate luncheon for me."

But the Kaiser took no notice and continued to associate with this man and his infamous coterie: General Count Kuno Moltke, Count Johannes Lynar, who went to prison; Counts Fritz and William Hohennau, Friedrich Krupp, the cannon king, and others.

Opinion at court and serious men generally, fully endorsed Prince Bismarck's drastic characterization

and there were many who thought it applied to all the rest of His Majesty's intimates, including Huelsen, and the cloud of military chums, his adjutants, etc.

"It is a pity," said the Empress Frederick after Count Waldersee's retirement from Berlin, "that my son will have none but lightweights about him; all men of acumen are pushed aside. Still, I suppose I must not grumble so long as Count Herbert is kept out." Empress Frederick regarded Herbert Bismarck as the man who had instilled in the Emperor the liking for persons of his—Herbert's—stamp—flatterers, shallow and insolent, defamers of womankind, taphouse jesters and buttons. "Scratch either of the Kiderlen-Eulenburg crew and the pickle herring will appear," she was wont to say, and years ago nothing gave her greater satisfaction than the termination of William's friendship with the Austrian Crown Prince Rudolph, whom she abhorred as any decent woman might abhor a beast.

After all, men and women are judged by the company they keep. Admitted that the Kaiser had not a great number of peers to choose from—Count Schulenburg, royal chamberlain, figured out that every tenth German noble was a moral leper—if William himself had been a clean, decent man, why did he select the most notorious and despicable members of the aristocracy for his companions?

There were the two Hohenau's, fugitives from justice; Count Kuno Moltke, ditto; Count Lynar, Prisoner No. 2213 at Liegburg Penitentiary; Count Edgar Wedell, banished from German soil; Major Von Normann, suicide when about to be taken into custody.

But admitting that Prussian nobles are rotters, there were at least sixty-nine millions of other Germans to choose from.

Correct. His Majesty did choose among them. And here are the names, etc., according to Criminal Court

records: Sailor Trost, of the Hohenzollern; Recruit Bollhardt, of the Cuirassiers; Corporal Riedel, of the Lancers; Gus Steinhauer, police sergeant; Private Kestler and others of that caliber.

Most of the last named crew are in jail, or were in jail when the war broke out.

CHAPTER V

The Kaiser mistreated his mother, the Kaiserin hated her mother-in-law.

Taking all in all, it is quite evident that the lack of sympathy between the two Empresses had its origin in other causes than those popularly assigned. The Empress Frederick could never quite forget "that girl's impudence."

The day after Princess Victoria's arrival at Neues Palais, there happened to be a garden party to the poor children of the neighborhood, when they were treated to chocolate and cakes and music and condescension; cheap things, it is true, but highly appreciated.

Victoria had to assist in this charitable enterprise, and did so with good grace, for everybody's eyes were upon her; but when, at last, the children were dismissed, she ran to her apartments in hot haste, and, calling her maid, cried: "Off with this dress, quick, I'm afraid I smell of poor people!"

The expression of disgust was in bad taste, and exceedingly impolitic besides, for Victoria's attendant belonged to the royal household and forthwith blabbed about the incident in the "flunkies' own."

And so it came to her mother-in-law's ears, and the same things began happening at the palace that happen at Mrs. Brown's or Mrs. Jones's house on the avenue or the boulevard.

As a consequence the young princess was warned to mend her ways toward Her Imperial Highness. She refused to do so; she would rather make a Brockdorff her friend and invite a Waldersee to be her governess, than submit to the higher intellect of her husband's parents.

At all times Auguste Victoria never loved, some-

times fought, and always feared her mother-in-law. There are people who assert that the similarity of their characters was one of the chief reasons for the strained relations between Kaiserin Frederick and her son. Both were too pig-headed, too prejudiced, too much wedded to the " no surrender " policy, to come to an understanding.

Knowing both her husband's and her mother-in-law's weaknesses, Auguste Victoria ought to have intermediated, or, that failing ought to have done her part toward bringing about and preserving amicable relations. But she did nothing of the kind.

In those awful days of June, 1888, when the new Kaiser, attended by the madman Normann, exploited his cruel egotism at his father's death-bed, when he made his mother and sisters prisoners of state until his search for an imaginary secret testament was completed—from 9 a. m., on June 15, until after Frederick's funeral—Augusta Victoria renounced her rights of wife and mother altogether; before William's deeds of unprecedented barbarity she relinquished even her womanly feelings.

Even as she displayed none when her husband ordered outrages upon the women and children of Belgium, Northern France and the eastern countries and when his representatives in Turkey winked at the killing of a million Christians and the crucifixion of hundreds of girls and babies.

If ever wife and mother ought to have stood up for another wife and mother; if ever woman ought to have thrown the halo of womanly love around another,—that was the time! What did Auguste Victoria do? She said she would come to Friedrichskron as soon as her crepe gown was ready.

Meanwhile, William had declared the property rights of all the people in the palace—his palace—forfeited for the time being; as the feudal lord of old seized a bondsman's personal estate while the body was yet

warm, so had the presence of death—a father's waxen face—no restraining influence over the new master. The late Emperor's, his wife's and daughter's writing-desks, their strong boxes, trinket-boxes, bedrooms, and boudoirs, were subjected to a rigid examination before the owners were allowed access again. And in the midst of the rumpus a four-horse coach brought the new Empress!

Kaiserin Frederick had no patience to hear Auguste Victoria declaim.

"Send Brockdorff away," she said, curtly. And then the proud old woman unbent enough to ask, nay, implore, her daughter-in-law to stop William's ravings.

"By all that is holy to you," she is said to have exclaimed, "stop that man from desecrating my home and my noble dead. I have appealed to his love, to his sense of decency, to his manliness. It is your turn now. Talk to him with the authority of a wife and mother. He must listen to you. And unless you expect to be treated by your sons as I have been treated by my son during the last two hours,—restrain him, re-establish me as mistress within my own walls, and I will be forever grateful to you."

Auguste Victoria went into the library, and returned after a few moments, her face flushed and trembling.

"I can do nothing," she faltered out; "'Willie' is here as Emperor, and I cannot interfere with his official business."

"Then have the goodness to go back to your Marble Palace and play with your children," cried the widowed Empress hotly.

And the hostilities were reopened. In the interval occasioned by the new Kaiserin's reception, William had informed his mother's officials and servants that he was their master now and that they must obey no one's orders but his own.

Thereupon the old Empress:

"Whoever refuses to carry out any of my commands

promptly and willingly, will be instantly dismissed and forfeits his rights to pension."

Victoria had furnished her court marshal with a list of persons who were to be admitted to the house in order that they might have a last look at her dead hero. Frederick's personal and political friends were on the list, but William tore it up.

Have ever such scenes occurred in the presence of death? The new lord's "drill-ground tenor" cutting short the impassioned speech of an outraged wife and distracted mother! Entreaties, appeals, threats, on the one side; cold indifference, scorn, sneering references to "facts" on the other.

There was no peace between the reigning Hohenzollerns and the proud mother, shorn of power, thereafter. A resemblance of familiar intercourse was kept up as long as the Empress Augusta lived, but after her death the Kaiser' enmity to his mother became a matter of political significance. German statesmen trimmed their sails according to its fluctuations.

The Empress Frederick and Augusta Victoria had one more momentous meeting when the negotiations for the Dowager Kaiserin's removal from Castle Friedrichskron were pending.

The older woman strenuously opposed her son's claims to the property, first because she herself desired to retain the house where she had lived so long, and, second, because she feared William would ruin himself in the possession of this castle, whose vastness and splendor offer particular temptations for establishing a court out of all proportions to the Kaiser's revenues. However, the "Augustenburger" would not see it in that light. She was as eager to branch out a la Versailles as her husband.

After three months of widowhood, Empress Frederick left Friedrichskron. She was crying bitterly as she went through the park and halls, taking leave of everything and everybody.

"Here I have spent the most beautiful days of my married life, and afterward endured the awfullest hours woman can endure," she remarked to General von Lindequist, then commander of Potsdam. To the officials and servants, each of whom, she shook by the hand, she said: "If you ever want to see your old mistress again, you must come to Berlin, where I will make you welcome with pleasure. May palsy strike my foot if ever I thrust it over this threshold again."

As was to be expected from a woman of her character, she kept her word. Occasional quasi enforced visits between their Majesties and Empress Frederick took place on neutral grounds. The Dowager Kaiserin received her son and daughter-in-law in the manor-house of the farm Bornstadt, a mile or so from the Neues Palais, and next day they repaired to the Marble Palace or Stadt *Schloss* to give her Majesty an opportunity to return the compliment.

Empress Frederick was very seldom in Berlin, and had always an excuse ready for declining invitations to official or private festivities held at her son's court. Even when she lived Under den Linden at Christmas time, she declined the pleasure of seeing the children. After the scenes at Frederick's death-bed she had been driven forth from her home, and this insult was quickly followed by another, aimed at her dead husband.

After William and Auguste Victoria took possession of Friedrichskron, this name was abolished by royal decree and the old, now meaningless Neues Palais reinstated. I remember it well. All of a sudden officers of the court marshal's office called on the ladies and gentlemen of the court, demanding us to hand over every scrap of stationery stamped Friedrichkron. The confiscated stuff was burned, and we were left without writing-paper for a full week. Her Majesty herself had to write her letters on ordinary blue-lined sheets, bought in a penny store, as she would not use the official foolscap.

A third and fourth cause of chagrin to Empress Frederick was the Kaiser's treatment of his brother and sister. Prince Henry was to have had the Villa Carlotta in Sans Souci Park, which is Crown property, for a summer home, but the Kaiser lent the house and beautiful gardens to Baron von Lyncker.

Next he turned the Meiningens out of their Thiergarten villa, which Emperor Frederick had rented for his daughter and son-in-law with the understanding that the Minister of the royal house pay the rent as long as the Meiningens cared to remain. William no sooner learned of this arrangement than he repudiated it.

"I pay the Meiningens' rent? Not for a day, not for an hour," and the landlord was at once notified that, after the expiration of the lease, at the end of three months, he would receive no more money from the royal treasury.

Empress Frederick was shocked when my mistress decided to go to Felixstowe with her children and a suite of fifty persons, and, to secure more spending money, authorized court marshal von Eulenburg to deprive the servants of their allowance of butter for first breakfast and for supper.

The Kaiser's menage never allowed butter for second breakfast. Now it happened that the servants transferred from Empress Frederick's court to that of William, were among the first to petition for redress. Ergo, the cry of Empress Frederick's enemies, that "'the Britisher' was at the bottom of the quarrels."

"I knew nothing about these petty quarrels," said the Dowager Kaiserin, some time afterwards, to Countess Wilhelm Hohenau, "but I certainly think that this latest make-shift was most disgraceful. Depriving a servant of his butter is as bad as selling a dead man's false teeth."

Though the strong-minded English woman was noted for her outspoken criticisms, this remark, aimed di-

rectly at Augusta Victoria and coming to her ears in and quick possible way, created first consternation and later on a demand for repraisals. Since it required publicity, it became a virtue at court to call the Empress Frederick names.

As mentioned in another place, the German was permitted to designate Frederick William IV an ass,—not a "confounded ass" or a "mouse-colored ass," merely an ass, no more, no less,—but with respect to blackguarding the dowager, there was no limit whatever. She was a "traitress," of course, and "hands over German state secrets to her mother every morning for breakfast." "All the English and American newspapers that make fun of the Kaiser are in her pay,"—certainly. "She tries to establish the London Sabbath in Berlin," "writes letters to Queen Louise of Denmark" and "conspires with her brother," the Prince of Wales.

And now let us get to the bottom of the enmity between mother and son and between mother-in-law and daughter-in-law.

Just one month after the reign of ninety-nine days had begun, Empress Frederick drove from Charlottenburg to the Berlin *Schloss*, having previously ordered Prince Bismarck to meet her. Then the Kaiserin informed the Chancellor that Frederick had decided not to leave her (in the event if his death) to the tender mercies of her son.

"Cherishing no illusions with respect to William's sense of justice, or to his gentlemanly qualities," he said, "the Emperor orders that seventy-five per cent. of my portion, as well as the dowries of my unmarried daughters and all my daughters' shares in our property, be paid by the Crown treasury now, while the rest is to be held at our disposal, to be paid over the moment my husband dies, and before the new Emperor assumes control of the funds and revenues."

Bismarck was dumbfounded.

"Here are the Kaiser's orders, signed and countersigned and sealed. And," added the Empress, "His Majesty enjoins your Grace and all the persons taking official cognizance of this act to the greatest secrecy. I have your word, Prince?"

"You have, Your Majesty."

Of this arrangement William never heard a breath until the morning of June 15.

Those who followed the events preceding Bismarck's dismissal will remember that the Chancellor, before submitting to the Kaiser's request for his resignation, went to the Empress Frederick to ask her intercession. At that momentous interview he reminded her Majesty of the service rendered her two years before. But the Empress merely shook her head: "It is that which stands forever between me and my son."

Money, always, money! William Hohenzollern tried to convince the world that he despised Americans because of "their love for dollars"; he couldn't tolerate the English, because "they were a nation of hucksters," yet he fought with his mother over a few hundred thousand dollars, not because she owed him that amount, but because she would not allow him to rob her and his sisters of it.

And the same high-minded William Hohenzollern made a woman (Countess Eulenburg) pay for his wine and meat and furnish him a suite of rooms. An uncrowned mortal who does such things earns for himself an epithet that no publisher would print under any circumstances whatsoever. What about God's anointed?

When hundreds of German pens were busy composing scurrilous notes, my mistress received several missives that completely unnerved her, although their contents did not refer to escapades on the part of the Emperor, but, on the other hand, were inventions so stupid as to be almost pitiable. I dare hint at only one of the lot, —a photograph representing a female with her Ma-

jesty's face and features, and at her side court chaplain Stoecker in his well-known clerical bib.

This reflection upon her platonic friendship for the bigoted and ambitious parson threw my poor mistress into a fever from which she recovered only after a week or ten days. At the same time, the Kaiser, his adjutants, his friends, the aristocracy, the conservaties, and almost the entire press engaged in "rotten-egging" Stoecker, and Augusta Victoria, who ought to have stood by him, kept silent.

Some time after the receipt of the Stoecker picture the Emperor was absent. Princess Louise (sister of the Kaiserin) drove up while my mistress was having her hair dressed.

"Princess Frederick Leopold?" repeated the Empress, when I made the announcement.

"So the Kammerdiener reports, Your Majesty."

"Something must have happened at Glienecke! Quick, Countess, go ask my sister's pardon, and beg her to come in here," and, turning to her women, her Majesty added: "You may retire for the present."

The Kaiser and Frederick Leopold had not been on good terms for some time, and the royal sisters, who, of course, take sides with their husbands, had seen each other at stated occasions only during the past year. This explains my mistress' surmisal that something was amiss.

Princess Louise was never handsome, but she looked a fright that morning. Her eyes were red and her face was blotched. "You must send everybody from the room and antechamber before I begin to speak to her Majesty," she said.

The subject of conversation between the sisters was an anonymous note.

"If you want to know why Frederick Leopold calls you a woman of the second class, consult your mirror when you go to bed to-night and compare your reflection with —"

"The letter went on to tell what might happen if 'Loloki' learned of the relations between his mistress and his Royal Highness," and it was this semi-threat that brought Princess Louise to Augusta's feet. She asked her sister nothing more nor less than to ransack his Majesty's mailbag for a fac-simile of the telltale letter (there were always duplicates, you know). This my mistress refused to do.

"I cannot believe in the reported intimacy between Willie and Countess Fritz," she said, "and will undertake nothing to either set right or deny the scandalous surmisal."

When the Kaiser returned next day, it became evident at once that he had a brand new grievance against "Milord of Glienecke," whom he held up to ridicule more than ever, and the ultimate result of it all was Frederick Leopold's appointment to the position of Brigadier of Infantry. The son of the famous Red Prince reduced to the foot, when he had confidently expected to obtain a command in the cavalry. It was the unkindest cut of all!

That the Kaiser told us ladies of his household what we should wear was tyrannical, but not wholly unreasonable, seeing that he imagined he owned us body and soul, but other women, even relatives of his Majesty, would not take kindly to his expensive suggestions. Seldom did a ball or state occasion pass that there was not a gap in the line of our royal dames; now the Hereditary Princess of Hohenzollern sent "her regrets," again Princess Aribert went to bed twenty-four hours previous to a costume festival at court.

Even the Hereditary Grand Duchess of Baden declined time and again to help her husband by reckless extravagance of toilets, such as the Kaiser demanded his guests to engage in.

As a matter of fact, William's passion for having everything his own way was entirely incompatible with reason. There was no art outside of the narrow circle

approved by him, no stage and no state craft, unless conducted on rules laid down by him to actors, to parliamentarians, to diplomats. His soldiers, his children, the women of his household and of society, his officials and men friends, all must be dressed, or must masquerade, according to his varying moods.

Strange to say, he succeeded in dazzling a lot of people; others looked upon him as a madman and, being in his power, danced as he whistled lest they lose their head, official or social. But such of William's relatives, who could help themselves, gradually faded away from Berlin. They went to live in other German towns or in the country. It saved them lots of money for clothes and entertainment and a good many browbeatings besides.

In the end only one Prussian Princess remained at court, the widow of Prince Frederick Charles, who conquered Metz by buying up Bazaine.

Princess Marie, born Princess of Anhalt was a grande dame of the old school, who, despite poverty, drove the tallest horses, and employed the loveliest maids of honor and the best looking footmen.

Those inclined to think that William was sufficient of evil in one and the same family, do not reckon with the trait of imitativeness rampant among princes. German kings and kinglets loathe the Hohenzollerns, it is true, but, to a man, try to out-Prussianize them.

When Berlin court gossip whispered that William got tipsy, the King of Bavaria went to bed with his boots on.

When the Hohenzollern was said to have snubbed his wife, the King of Saxony beat his (and got well cuffed in return by the Royal Louise).

When William condescended to pay the Berlin dog tax (without prejudice, mind you), the mighty Potentate of Reuss-Greitz-Schleitz-Kranichfeld and Eberswalde decided to tax himself for the order of the Green Ass which he had bestowed upon himself.

Princess Frederick Charles, like the Empress Frederick, was cursed with a son who was a complete egoist. Her late husband, the brutal and churlish Frederick Charles, who never relaxed the grasp of his riding-whip at home, had no sooner closed his drunken eyes, than his heir, Frederick Leopold, the Kaiser's cousin, kicked his mother out of her castle; the palace on Wilhelm's Platz and the country-seats of Glienecke, Drelinden, etc. This boy, scarcely of age, had no room for his mother. Every roof and every foot of his immense landed possessions he needed for his overgrown self.

There were family meetings and notes of protest from all royal relatives of Europe; Frederick Leopold could neither be bullied nor wheedled. He stood on his rights. The Kaiser finally patched up the ugly Albretch Palace, on Leipzlger Platz, for her, where Princess Marie lived, attended by Countess Puckler and Baron von Wangenheim, who has been her gentleman of the bed-chamber for many years.

There is a rumor that her Royal Highness's relations to the Baron were legalized by a marriage enacted before the Minister of the Royal House, but I have never been able to verify this statement, which is guarded like a state secret. The fact that the Emperor's and Empress's invitations to the Princess of late included Wangenheim seemed to indicate that the couple was at last united.

When summer came, poor Princess Marie had to move with her little court to Castel Bruhl, a tumbledown palace between Bonn and Cologne, though dozens of wellkept imperial castles stood empty in the neighborhood of the capital.

One afternoon, when the Princess entertained at Bruhl, Madame Surmond naively asked: "But your Royal Highness, why did you come down to this lonely chateau? It must be very annoying to a lady who has lived in the great world all her life to put up with

such poor company as we are, and with such comforts, or rather discomforts, as this castle offers."

"My dear woman," answered Princess Marie, raising herself proudly, "I am penniless and homeless, truths you may be unable, or perhaps unwilling, to believe. But that makes them none the less onerous, I assure you: 'You have a son, the richest prince in the empire, you say.' Yes, but my Leopold is not an agreeable man. He is hard-hearted, and he wishes me dead every day in the year."

Still worse was the Kaiser's and Kaiserin's treatment of this royal lady during the severe illness of the Hereditary Grand Duchess of Oldenburg, Princess Frederick Charles's second daughter, who fell dangerously ill while attending our court in Potsdam, making an indefinite stay imperative.

Princess Frederick Charles came day after day from Berlin to nurse her daughter, and repeatedly complained to the Empress that this journeying to and fro in the heat of the summer was killing her, an old woman.

As the summer wore on, Princess Frederick Charles got in a state approaching nervous prostration, and her physicians told her that she must either go and live in Potsdam or go to some other country-place; those fatiguing trips had to stop at once. Again she submitted the case to her imperial niece, and a third time her Majesty expressed merely vague regrets.

Next day the Princess was carried off to Woerlitz by order of her brother, who had been informed of her precarious condition.

"I tremble lest the world may condemn me," she wrote to her sick daughter a few days afterward—"you, my dear, in sorest need of a mother's care, and I seemingly enjoying myself at this ever jolly court. But what could I do? His Majesty would not offer me a bed at your present home, though, I understand, one hun-

dred and fifty of the chambers in the Stadt *Schloss* are unoccupied."

Such brutality seems almost incredible, but Marshal Eulenburg offered a very lucid explanation. "If her Royal Highness had been lodged at the Stadt *Schloss*, it would have been necessary to give accommodations to her maid of honor and to two or three maids at the very least. That," said the Count, "meant the feeding of four or five persons, which we could ill afford."

Duchess Calma, the best-looking of the four Augustenburg sisters,—a very pretty woman with large blue eyes, a marvelously fine complexion of pink and white, and luxurious blonde hair, often stayed with us during the Kaiser's long absences, and was kind and approachable, but painfully embarrassed with strangers. She had very little education, and was not naturally bright. The same may be said of her husband, Duke Frederick, who was really little more than a good-natured dunce, subject to fits of disagreeableness.

To exemplify the penury prevailing in the ducal household, I need but mention, that, when his Highness was invited to fetch away his wife and little girls, he sent his regrets, excusing himself with having nothing to wear.

"The Kaiser's order, that all visiting princes must appear in uniform," he wrote, "makes it impossible for me to comply with your gracious request. My uniform coat and attila are still in good condition, but my breeches are sadly in need of new silver braid, and I cannot afford to have them done up this year."

The couple had four lovely children, only a little too ethereal were these thin-limbed, narrow-chested youngsters. I have often heard them crying with hunger in the nursery, and once spoke to the Duchess about it.

"Ah," said her Highness, "they get more than at home. I leave it entirely to their governess. When I remonstrate with her about underfeeding my little

girls, she makes answer: 'I want them to be fine and English looking, not like fat German children. Those are detestable.'"

So this senseless mother, who mistrusted her own judgment in all things, allowed her poor youngsters to be half-starved, that a spleeny governess might have her way. To see these little Highnesses stealthily munch bread and sausage, the gift of good-hearted chamber-women and lackeys,—for they begged food of everyone they caught hold of,—was one of the parodies on royalty encountered in the German Emperor's palace.

The pretty youngsters with the thin legs and hungry eyes appealed to everyone's sympathy, save that of their stupid mother and the Kaiser, but as they were not his children, William wouldn't say the word that would have brought instant relief to the poor youngsters. What was it to him whether, or not, one or more of his poor relations died, or was doomed to consumption.

A royal person often mentioned in these memoirs is the Duke of Schleswig.

Misfortune attended, for many years, the Kaiserin's efforts to get her brother settled. She dearly loved this good-hearted but wild boy whose sins against propriety she shielded more than once with her own royal person when Gunther held forth in the Palais Pourtales and the air was thick with rumors of orgies held at that doubtful establishment.

At such times her Majesty used to invite herself to breakfast at Gunther's, and the announcement, duly published in the newspapers, had a tendency to stop the tongues of irreverent babblers. Surely, her Majesty would not visit a house where dancing girls were served for dessert on shell platters, swimming in cologne water, and where champagne was drunk out of slippers!

Finally, Gunther engaged himself to the only daughter of Philip of Coburg, Princess Dorothy, then a little

over fifteen years of age. "She looked like a school miss, so innocent and petite," reported Baron Windheim to her Majesty. He had seen the young lady at a dinner given in her and Duke Gunther's honor by our Paris ambassador. Others who attended the banquet say the Jewish blood of the Koharys is perceptible in her features, and to no great advantage, either.

While Count Munster's guests were listening to a concert, Princess Dorothy was rolling on the floor with a couple of big hounds.

Meanwhile William's unpopularity with his royal brethren was on the increase. At the English court, it is true, he was tolerated as the "grandson of Queen Victoria," but the English public revelled in King Edward's dictum: that William was not, and could never be a gentleman, or even imitate one.

Hence his aversion to King George, as displayed during the war, and the cruelty of his air raids on London and English watering-places, that had so often greeted and entertained him.

Russia mistrusted William. The reasons were obvious, but the Kaiser refused to see them. In the early months of 1914, accordingly, he was forever talking of "punishing Nickey." He could have saved "Nickey's" life and that of the Czarina and her children, but because he was not on friendly terms with them, he let them be thrown into the melting-pot of his blood thirst.

Italy had small reason for loving William. Therefore, "off with his head, so much for Victor." Victor was to be discrowned, but the Pope was to be cheated also!

Politics aside, William courted the displeasure of his royal colleagues, even filled them with fear, by his readiness to shower their face with kisses on the slightest provocation. One kiss wouldn't do, he thought it necessary to bestow at least three or four to attest his friendship.

Now, a kiss, not to mention a succession of them,

from a person said to be infected with cancer, is no desirable commodity. Do you wonder that kings fought shy of William's visits?

Again, the Kaiser had many vulgar habits, among them that of slapping his thighs during conversation. The noise he made and the motion itself were nerve-racking to some of the older monarchs—the Berlin court marshal's office has a safe full of letters to that effect, suggesting that the Kaiser's attention be drawn to the offensiveness of the habit. But, of course, no one dared attempt such a thing as to correct an imperial boor.

CHAPTER VI

It is essential at this time, in order to give the world a true understanding of the personalities behind the Great War, that we become fully acquainted with the Kaiserin, as well as the Kaiser. Historians and biographers must study to discover whether she was a factor in the world tragedy—or merely a victim. It is being asserted that she fed the Kaiser's mania for world conquest; that she encouraged it for years as his life ambition; and that she demanded it as a heritage for her son, the Crown Prince. Therefore, she must stand revealed before the penetrating light of historical investigation.

My long years of intimacy with the Kaiserin failed to create either affection or pity for her. She is one of the most selfish women I ever met. She is inordinately vain. She has no sympathy for the people; she is an idolater of wealth and a tyrant of the poor. She hates Americans; she tyranizes over her servants—and she believes the Hohenzollerns (her children), were ordained by God to rule the world with an iron hand. But, like every German wife, she feared her husband and bowed to his will.

The Empress is not a pretty woman; not even among daughters of Germany is she entitled to that distinction. The once awkward girl has developed into a large Frau, strong-limbed, square-footed and broad-shouldered, as we meet them by the hundred in the capital, or in any town in the Fatherland, for that matter.

She has small grayish-blue eyes, with light, scanty lashes and brows—sincerest flattery could not call them beautiful, or even pleasing, especially as, for some

reason or other, they appear slightly swollen three days out of four. Her arms are beautifully modeled, and white as alabaster, the hands well taken care of, but too large and given to puffiness, a condition which constant massage forestalls to some extent, but not wholly.

If not under the surveillance of the multitude, her Majesty walks like a knock-kneed person; at all times she prefers to lean on somebody's arm, or on a piece of furniture, which tendency gives one an idea that her nether limbs are weak despite their superb outward development.

That fine figure, so universally admired, was indeed very far from being at that time a product of stays and powder, as some ladies of the aristocracy gave out, but a luminous reality to which the Kaiser was strongly attracted. During the first four or five years of her imperial life, Augusta Victoria might have adopted Queen Louise's corsetless costume without fear of offending the most artistic eye.

In the early nineties, however, she became very fat.

And alas, that vanity should have induced her to spoil her figure, and complexion as well, by submitting to various kinds of flesh-reducing treatment, and by using all known sorts of cosmetics.

I dare say some chance observers will endeavor to correct my estimate of her Majesty's feet, but in doing so these critics really compliment the royal shoemakers' perfect art; there are two of these functionaries, both natives of Vienna. As to the shoemakers of the Fatherland, her Majesty would no sooner think of employing any of them than she would eat peas with her knife.

While a man's number seven, American measure, might give the Empress supremest comfort, her special artists build for the imperial lady foot-gear intended to defy normal conclusions as to dimensions.

Her Majesty pays from a hundred to a hundred and fifty florins for these works of art, which are the only items of toilet she hates to cast off, and, indeed, wears

until brushes and creams of all sorts fail to bring back waning luster.

They are beautiful to look at (the very envious must admit that), but, oh, the pains they give their vain owner!

The Empress' broad face, though at times slightly disfigured by freckles, would not be displeasing except for the very red nose, conspicuous whenever she appears in public. And that red nose is only one of the ugly results of feet screwed out of all original resemblance. I am convinced of it, because I never saw her Majesty with a red nose at home, even at periods when she was suffering from a cold.

That additional blot appears only when least wanted, at the theater, on the throne, on horseback, though there is really small excuse for wearing the tightest of boots—we call them " Scotch boots " in commemoration of a pleasant custom they had in the land of kilts and bagpipes to promote confessions in criminal proceedings—under the long-flowing robe. Still, in mounting or dismounting, the royal feet might show, and her Majesty desires to be on the safe side with respect to physical charms and shortcomings.

To sum up: her Majesty is a tall woman of imposing carriage, with a face that is weak rather than intellectual. Having learned how to and ever mindful of the desired end, that to smile upon the populace and to affect a certain dignified air in public, has in it a ring of true courtesy, no matter what people, who, like myself, are behind the scenes, may think, she is always sure of a " good reception," as the newspapers say, for her condescension, though studied.

As the eighth Henry's daughter posed as the virgin Queen, so does the German Empress pose as the ideal Hausfrau; but while the first succeeded only in deluding the unthinking, the present august lady has tricked the entire civilized world into crediting her with fanciful domestic virtues.

I am told that (for many years before the war), one could not open a magazine or a newspaper, printed either in Europe, America, Asia or Africa, not to forget Australia, without encountering some such article as "The Kaiserin as a Mother," "The German Empress Investigating Her Kitchen," "Auguste Victoria Superintending Her Linen Chest." Books of travel, the A B C for the young, and religious tracts alike teem with allusions to her Majesty's facilities in the line of sewing, child-bearing, darning and plain cooking.

As a matter of fact, the Empress has visited the lower regions of her residential castles where the very bad indigestibles that grace the imperial table are prepared, but once in her life (so the servants tell me), and on that occasion she deigned to look into the department where the linen is kept, but never more.

It was a great and wonderful event, however, while it lasted, and the royal housekeeper, and her host of white-capped and ditto-aproned girls and women probably passed an hour of supreme anxiety lest the great lady should know enough to find fault with things as they were. In this unpleasant anticipation they were luckily disappointed, however, and aside from the "cheap copy" it made for the press, generally despised but often appealed to by royalty, the visit resulted merely in a single recommendation: It was ordered and decreed by her Imperial and Royal Majesty that thereafter the all-highest table linen be marked in a different-colored thread from the most gracious bedclothes. From time immemorial at the Prussian court, table coverings and sheets alike have been adorned with a red crown.

The only thing about the house which really interests her Majesty is the daily menu, and that its composition be agreeable to her as well as to the Emperor. To that end the "Speisenfolge" proposed is placed on her dressing-table nightly, so she may strike out or add anything she likes.

But while not a Hausfrau in the accepted sense of the word, Auguste Victoria unfortunately inherited from her mother certain disagreeable traits that in a more or less pronounced degree are found in the majority of German women, qualities dignified as positive virtues by many, and which poets and like irresponsible persons not unfrequently laud to the skies.

Her Majesty is peevish, unjust and petty in the treatment of her retinue, the very best reason why the royal household in the Neues Palais or *Schloss* is as little free from vexations and even domestic brawls as other institutions of the kind, be they extensive or small, in Berlin, Potsdam or anywhere in the Fatherland for that matter.

Sprung from nonpuissant stock and reared in comparative poverty, Auguste Victoria seems to abhor the very conditions that gave her discomfort in younger days.

In her Majesty's eyes an untitled servant is of no more consequence than a beggar, and that poverty and uncleanliness are necessarily synonymous terms is one of her fixed ideas.

In the majority of Berlin households those obligato squabbles begin in the bright and early morning and the Empress would not be German unless she followed that fashion and kept up a continuous performance till night. Every nation, you must know, boasts but one sort of clay for high and humble, and loftiness of station does not count much when a glove-buttoner is missing or a glass of seltzer has been allowed to flatten.

It was on such occasion that the Princess of Meiningen's sweeping criticism of her sister-in-law, *viz.*: that " Dona " (that is her Majesty's pet name in the family) " is the most arrogant and pretentious Princess on any throne in Christendom," is borne out in its most disagreeable aspects. A peep into the Empress' apartments on almost any morning of the year will explain.

Usually the day's scolding and annoyance is ushered

in by the finding of certain memoranda on slips of paper, or visiting cards, which the chamber-women discover when making up the Empress' bed. There are strict orders that these notes must be placed on her Majesty's toilet table without delay, for they are in the all-highest handwriting and pencilled to assist the royal memory.

I shudder when I think what a mercenary in the court marshal's office could do with some of these brief feuilletons—records of imperial weakness and malice. How the autograph fiends would fight and bid for them at Christy's!

"Fifty guineas for her Majesty's complaint as to 'his Majesty's ill-temper on the eve of Bismarck's dismissal.'"

"One hundred guineas for 'the Kaiser's remarks on the Duchess of Aosta in his sleep,' taken down verbatim by his august spouse, who sat up in bed horrified." For such and similar affairs those tell-tale "memos" register in springy, excited monosyllables and unsteady letters—once in a while. And then, of course, they were written down to aid her Majesty in making "copy" for her diary; not at all were they intended for the court marshal's eyes, but they come to him just the same, in waste baskets, crumpled and torn, or riding upon the sharp tongues of his numerous spies and flatterers. The notes indited for that functionary's benefit usually specify some misconduct on a servant's part in this style: "Spoon tasted of silver powder," or "Nolte appeared to have been drinking last night."

Nolte was one of her Majesty's Kammerdiener (valet de chambre), and a man more sober and industrious one cannot find among a thousand of his class. Still, he may unwittingly have given offense to the all-exacting royal lady, and, thinking it over in bed, while perhaps waiting for her husband to come, she put down the first accusation that occurred to her.

After she herself got through scolding poor Nolte, he

was to be bullied, in addition, by his superior officer Baron von Lyncker. The latter gentleman, who was general overseer of the servants' hall, wasted at least an hour of his valuable time daily listening to explanations of these memoranda on the part of her Majesty, and the investigations following, fruitless most of them, lasted even longer.

The "memos" disposed of other vexations of life. Like many of her sex, "Dona" would rather read forbidden books than the sort that languishes on every drawing-room table, but, of course, the Kaiser must know nothing of that. Imagine the job of keeping anything from William, whose bump of meddlesomeness is so abnormally developed! Surely, no one will blame the Empress for innocently deceiving a husband who would as lief go through her pockets as send a bill to the Chancellor.

She fools him constantly—has to do it, in order not to die of ennui—and does it quite cleverly, too, by finding her hiding-places for her "Marcel Prevosts" and "Heinrich Lee" all the time, but, unfortunately, her Majesty is apt to forget overnight the exact locations of her literary treasures. That being the case, and it happens quite frequently, her chambermaids and attendants at the toilet come in for a dreadful half-hour of scolding and insinuation, the Kaiserin assuming, as a matter of course, that one of the women or girls took the book to read, or for a worse purpose even: they might want to turn it over to her husband's court marshal!

The poor females are dragged from their breakfast or their work to give detailed accounts of what they have been doing for the last twenty-four hours, where they keep their valuables, etc. Likewise, they are required to furnish their august mistress with views on literature held by themselves and by people nearest to them, the inquisition usually winding up with a per-

emptory demand that they must find the lost article within a certain time or suffer dismissal.

Like her forbidden books, the Empress' private letters are a constant source of annoyance to her retinue. Having a habit of leaving the most intimate missives lying around on toilet tables and in bandboxes, the Kaiserin never hesitates to accuse the person on duty in the rooms of reading them, and of spying upon her, when at last she recollects the incident; but as such scenes are matters of daily occurrence, the host of officials and waiting women deem them hardly worth talking about.

Alas, and alack, for the chimeras of this world! Common folks have troubles of their own, and, piqued by a thousand and one vexations and discomforts, torment others into a like unhappy state; it is a detestable yet not unpardonable habit; but what about the rich and mighty causing gloom and dejection for the mere pleasure of the thing?

Her Majesty is a very religious woman, and it is but natural that she commands her people to attend divine service on Sundays. With this wish the great majority would gladly conform, but for the fact that they have absolutely no time for their devotions. The men and women must be at their Majesty's beck and call until the very second they drive out; that is, up to 9.45 A.M.

Her Majesty decided to arrange for a special service to be held at the palace, and we ladies of the court received the agreeable commission to report truants. It is a disgusting duty, but we had to follow orders, and most unpleasant contentions arose when our grand mistress, Countess Brockdorff, took a hand in the game by rising at an early hour and watching things from her window, unknown to anybody. In that case not only the absentees got into trouble, but also we, who failed to tell on them.

Upon her Excellency's denunciation, myself and a poor chambermaid were up for a scolding once, and while I was inventing excuses for Pauline the best way I could, the girl burst out: "May it please your Majesty to remember that this going to church costs us an hour of sleep."

"And when do you have to rise in order to get through with your work and attend service?" demanded the Empress, raising her voice.

"At five o'clock, your Majesty."

"That is not so bad."

"No," said the girl, "not for those who idle from one year's end to the other."

This pert answer might have resulted in Pauline's dismissal, had she not immediately sacrificed a round five-mark piece for Augusta Victoria's church building fund. Countess Brockdorff had already obtained leave to bounce her, but that act of generosity saved her head. The Kaiserin cannot be angry long with a person who contributes a brick to some new church, but members of the household who refuse to be bled have an unhappy time of it.

The plate goes round three, four or five times per annum, and the amounts bestowed are carefully recorded to speak for or against the different parties, as the case might be. And that happens in a house where the servants are not only badly paid, but must needs forego the greater part of the presents domestics in ordinary establishments receive on stated occasions.

Sometimes, for no reason whatever, she takes a sudden dislike to persons and then she will not rest until they are discharged. So it happened that the nurse of little Prince Augustus, a girl of twenty-five, Emma Ruter by name, received orders to quit.

The young woman, daughter of a preacher in Westphalia, had been attached to the nursery for eight years; she loved the children and was beloved by them. Both Majesties had expressed satisfaction with her

work on divers occasions, and Emma fondly imagined that she was fixed for life, especially when on Christmas day the Empress had given her Prince Augustus' picture, bearing the all-highest autograph, together with some pious motto.

When the notice of dismissal came, Emma went at once to Countess Brockdorff to ask for an explanation, but her Excellency refused to enter into details. "I am acting under her Majesty's instructions." That was all she would say.

Five minutes later the girl came running into the nursery, with dishevelled hair and staring eyes. She threw herself on the floor, and her moans attracted half the household. The doctors said wounded pride and disappointment had caused her to be temporarily deranged. She was sent to an asylum. A week later poor Emma was a raving maniac. She died in a straitjacket at the end of the year.

I asked Countess Brockdorff, Count Eulenburg and Baron Lyncker why this girl had been discharged. All three had but praises for her, all three regretted the sad end of so worthy a person, none of the three knew what prompted her Majesty's displeasure. She probably did not know herself.

And right here I approach an almost limitless subject, that of Augusta Victoria's inordinate vanity.

"I wonder if Solomon the Wise ever knew a person half so vain as my granddaughter-in-law," the late Empress Augusta used to say, adding, with a smile: "Of course he did, else why should the authorship of the Ecclesiastes, with its quaint truism, 'All is vanity,' be imputed to him?"

There is probably not a brand of cosmetics, or similar application intended to beautify and improve the complexion or forestall and arrest adiposity, or any concoction whatever claiming this or that or a hundred things in the line of averting blemishes or amending one's good points, which the Empress has not employed

at one time or another, either externally or internally. The cupboards in the bathroom in Potsdam as well as in Berlin were veritable museums of curiously-shaped and highly-labeled bottles and pots and retorts, bearing the names of chemists the world over. Some are half-filled, others remain unopened, and all were procured at more or less heavy expense in money and time wasted, for the Kaiser and court marshal must, of course, know nothing of these carryings on, and not unfrequently strangers are pressed into service to procure the latest cosmetical novelties in vogue among Parisiennes or the inmates of Turkish harems.

The most beautiful piece of furniture in her Majesty's dressing-room was the washstand—a great marble slab of perfect black, resting on solid silver legs, the chefs-d'œuvre of some London silversmiths. Above was a mirror, with a richly ornamented, broad silver frame, set in the wall. A big table groans under the weight of innumerable bottles and platters, filled with toilet waters, medicines and a thousand and one things —jugs of milk and a plateful of cucumbers, bran water at the side of Ambree creme, fat powders and others, vaseline, eaux of a hundred denominations, vinegars of all brands, rose waters, " electricity drops," opium and what not.

Once the Emperor strayed into the room, and, seeing and smelling this exhibition, remarked: " I did not know the *Schloss* apotheke had moved up here. And what is that? " he added, pointing to the cucumber plate; " are you making yourself salad between times? I see you have plenty of vinegars and oils around."

The Empress sometimes attends luncheon in grand toilet and decollete, a habit English women pronounce shocking and Americans regard as ridiculous in the extreme. It is, however, nothing of the kind in Germany, where evening dress is quite the proper thing, if not the obligatory one, on all occasions of ceremony or social intercourse of a higher order.

Altogether there were four principal meals at the Berlin court, three of which were usually attended by guests and the highest officials of the household. The Kaiserin made it a point to appear on all these occasions in different styles of dress.

As a matter of fact, Augusta Victoria wears seven or eight different gowns every twenty-four hours, and tries on from ten to twelve to see which suit her best. If, for instance, a sea-green demitoilet is ordered for the theater, the wardrobe women must arrange all dresses of that color and description on the numerous skeleton puppets that line the walls in her Majesty's clothes presses, each robe having its own set of accompaniments as to stockings, shoes, petticoats, wraps and headgear.

About an hour and a half before the carriage starts, the Empress comes in to inspect her treasures and to decide what she will wear. But that does not end matters. Frequently, when her toilet is nearly finished, the august lady discovers that the shade chosen is not becoming to her on that particular day. "It makes me look old," or "I am afraid this color will not do under the electric light—what does your Excellency think?" This to Countess Brockdorff, grand mistress.

Of course, that lady agrees with the implied opinion, and "Away with this confounded toggery!" as Napoleon the Great said when divesting himself of his coronation robes. Another costume, with its numerous accessories, is brought from the mighty closets, and the process of robing is renewed, while probably two thousand people or more, having paid speculators' prices for the honor of sitting under the same roof with the imperial couple, are loyally wondering why the overture is delayed.

The Kaiserin seldom wears the same dress twice unless it has previously undergone a radical change in her own workshop, where she keeps from four to six dressmakers busy all the year round. On an average,

her Majesty uses up, or at least buys, from two hundred to two hundred and twenty-five costumes in the course of a year, some costing as little as one hundred dollars. The bills for others, by their size, give her chief of cabinet, Baron von Mirbach, palpitations.

Lately the Kaiserin's want of decision caused Berlin shopkeepers to regard a royal command to send goods on approval in anything but a joyful spirit; and small wonder, for nine times out of ten their good offices, expense and loss of time are thrown away.

Thus, to mention only one instance, the Empress ordered four or five metropolitan business houses, making a specialty of infants' ware and furniture, to dispatch to the palace a variety of cradles and small brass bedsteads suitable for the child she expected. As may be imagined, the firms so honored fairly outdid themselves in the race to furnish the finest and latest on hand. Twelve hours after the royal command had been given out, a succession of furniture vans rolled into our courtyard, and a bazaar, filled with lovely creations in the layette line—as the salespeople uniformly put it—was soon established in one of the big halls.

Among these treasures her Majesty wandered for a week or ten days, selecting this or that one minute and rejecting it an hour later. The embarrass de riches bewildered her, and, though knowing full well that she had only five hundred marks to spend, the very costliest offerings, exceeding her modest stipend twice or even three times over, engaged her fancy to the exclusion of all others.

The shopkeepers who had denuded their warerooms and show windows of chefs-d'œuvre to please the Empress, got tired after waiting a week, and remonstrated with the court marshal, petitioning for the return of their goods. That gentleman explained to her Majesty that she must decide without further delay; but it was not until the Berliners had actually begun to remove

their property, a fortnight after sending the things on approval, that Augusta Victoria chose among the remainder.

One day Grandmaster von Mirbach received the Vienna tailor's and milliner's bill with its four noughts, and florin at that! "The poor Baron," says an eye-witness, "was nearly knocked silly when he read the figures. 'Woher nehmen und nicht stehlen?' ('How can I pay this without resorting to thievery?') he cried, after partly recovering his composure; 'our treasury is as empty as a coronet's who spends his allowance in advance; I hardly know how to pay her Majesty's laundry bills for the ensuing three months.'"

Kammerherr von der Knesebeck spoke up at this juncture. "The Kaiser," he said, "remarked this morning that he was quite unable to decide on a birthday present for her Majesty. Why not propose that he assume payment of this bill? It will save his Majesty the trouble of choosing among a hundred and one offerings by the different purveyors and right your Excellency's budget, which is, after all, the main thing."

Of course, Herr von Mirbach jumped at this chance, and the ball was set rolling after the old-approved style, *viz.:* the entire palace camarilla combined to persuade the Emperor "that it was his all-gracious will and command to present the Kaiserin, on the occasion of her birthday, with three certain robes de chambre," the price of which exceeded his chancellor's annual salary.

Many readers will think Kaiser William too proud and self-assertive a personage to be wheedled. Let those doubters consider the court recipe for such acts of gentle inveiglement and own themselves sold. It runs somewhat after the fashion of Genesis, chapter IV, verse 18: "And Irad begat Mehujael: and Mehujael begat Methusael: and Methusael begat Lamech," etc. Herr von der Knesebeck told Baron Mirbach, Baron Mirbach told the Kaiser's court marshal, the court

marshal told the master of ceremonies, the master of ceremonies told the royal house marshal, the royal house marshal told the vice-grand-master of ceremonies, the vice-grand-master of ceremonies told the seneschal, the seneschal told the chief of cabinet, the chief of cabinet told the chief of the maison militaire, the chief of the maison militaire told the imperial adjutants and the whole set dinned it into the all-highest ears until the Emperor thought it his own " most gracious " idea, and consequently little short of divine inspiration.

The three dressing gowns were yanked into the royal palace—one literally came off the Kaiserin's back—and found immediate favor with William, who was just then contemplating his order of cabinet, creating the half-rococo, half-savage Prussian court dress. His Majesty ordered the bill paid without looking at it, and Augusta Victoria and her court marshal breathed easy once more.

The winter's round of festivities usually left the Empress' exchequer in more than the ordinary state of exhaustion, and her Majesty's noble resolve never to don a gown more than twice would certainly have to be amended in the summer months by some such proviso as " state of finances permitting," if it was not for the Grand Turk.

As usual, precious porcelains, turned out by the royal Berlin works, had found their way by New Year into the splendid harem on the bosom of the sweet waters, and the fat sultans and kadyns returned the compliment by selecting for the Frankish Empress the very choicest of Oriental cloths, linens, and gauzes. These presents to her Majesty arrived regularly in April, or the beginning of May, each year, and there being whole bales of the various textures and shades, Augusta Victoria was a very happy woman in consequence.

The number of seamstresses in the establishment was always largely increased in the spring, and I have seen

as many as forty wielders of needle and thread working under Frau von Haake's nominal direction after the Sultan's presents arrived. All heads of departments in the palace, it should be remembered, must be noble-born, and while the lady of the bed chamber knows no more how to fit a waist or "hang" a skirt than I do of such things, or of the mountains and canals on Mars, for that matter, she is excellently well qualified to find fault with low-born menials that do understand them.

With tales of royal worldliness on the one hand and of woe on the other I could fill many pages of these memoirs, but there would be little profit in such reading aside from a tendency to emphasize the fact that it is absurd to credit those born in the purple with a higher intellect, more finesse, more charity, less pettiness and less penury than ordinary mortals. However, I will not close this chapter without recording one signal triumph her Majesty's much-abused women experienced in the course of years, and at her cost too.

When Augusta Victoria was *en bonne esperance* for the seventh time in twelve years, she selected for the reception of the Queens of the Netherlands a particularly ugly toilet—a blue satin dress with an orange front and trimmings. The latter, real masterpieces of the embroiderer's art, were very difficult to sew on; but that notwithstanding, her Majesty ordered them removed and differently placed three times, compelling the seamstresses to work the whole Sunday until late in the night.

Of course, the girls were wroth, and on that account not at all displeased to see that the costume, which had given them so much trouble, was frightfully unbecoming to their mistress when at last she was arrayed in the glaring colors. To make matters still worse for the royal lady, her complexion was in a sadly muddled state just then. We Hofdamen felt deeply chagrined about all this, I assure you. However, the Empress had herself to blame, as she selected the colors against every-

body's advice, insisting upon their entire suitableness.

We were just debating in our own circle whether it would be prudent to tell her Majesty what an outrageous figure she cut, when a remark by little Wilhelmina, overheard by one of the maids and in duty reported to Countess von Brockdorff, led to an instant decision and caused the obnoxious dress to be removed without delay.

Think of it! That royal enfant terrible said to her mother, on reaching her apartments and probably thinking herself out of earshot: "It strikes me ma tante looks like one of those cockatoos our soldiers bring from Sumatra."

The mot passed from mouth to mouth in the palace, and its appropriateness was generally admitted, under the breath, of course. But the cockatoo story did not remain unknown to her, having come to the all-highest ears, the Emperor's, after much traveling, and William repeated it to "Dona" on the occasion of a domestic row.

As this anecdote indicates, the Empress has little notion of the suitableness of colors. She wears all in rotation.

In the matter of hats, Augusta Victoria was easily the best-dressed woman in Europe. As Princess William, Princess Imperial, and during her early years as Empress, the Kaiserin patronized Berlin milliners exclusively, and the result was not encouraging.

Here is what the Princess of Meiningen said when her mother, the Empress Frederick, engaged upon that dangerous journey to Paris: "If you love Augusta and myself, bring us hats, hats, hats, hats! They make beautiful millinery ornaments in this town, but don't know how to put them together. To me a German bonnet always looks like next of kin to a recruit's fatigue cap, while Berlin hats, even the most elaborate, seem to be fashioned a la Pickelhaube."

The same idea pervaded the unusually blunt speech of the Princess Philip of Coburg, who had not yet disgraced herself with her Colonel of Hussars, when, at the close of his Vienna visit, the Kaiser, while taking leave of her Royal Highness, incidentally remarked that he was unable to decide what to bring his wife.

"Get her some hats; she needs them, poor thing," cried King Leopold's eldest daughter, who is credited with having inherited all his wicked traits; "a mere private woman as I am, I would not exchange my coronet for the German diadem if at the same time I were compelled to wear the monstrous headgear your Berliners turn out."

The sally struck home, the more so as William has always entertained a high opinion of this Princess, who, it must not be forgotten, is the elder sister of Stephanie, widow of the late Crown Prince Rudolph.

"His Majesty," said Grandmaster Count Eulenburg, "reddened at first and seemed inclined to answer sharply, but, after a little reflection, confessed complete ignorance of the subject, though all present knew that he made it his business to order the Kaiserin about in matters of toilet as well as in other respects. 'Admitting, cousin, that you are correct in what you say,' his Majesty finally remarked, 'what am I going to do about it? I have not the time to run around millinery shops at the moment of leaving, and if I order a number of bonnets to be sent to the Burg, the bills will be of such magniture as to break my treasurer's heart, and perhaps my own, too.'

"We all laughed at this suggestion," continued his Excellency. "Her Royal Highness fairly shook with merriment as she exclaimed, semi-tragically: 'For the Lord's sake, William, do not become to us in Vienna what the Tecks are to the Prince of Wales in London, or (this with fine sarcasm), the Lippes to a certain King of Prussia! To forestall such a calamity let me offer my humble services. With your Majesty's per-

mission, I will drive with one of your gentlemen (here her Royal Highness's eyes lit upon the stalwart form of our friend Moltke) to my own purveyors, buy what is pretty and not too extravagant in price, and bring my finds in triumph to the station, where we will meet an hour from now in our waiting-room. Is that a bargain?'

"The Kaiser," Eulenburg wound up his story, "sealed the agreement by kissing her Royal Highness's white hands and arms; but she took him by the head and applied three right royal smacks upon his mouth, those to reconcile to him for the osculations of state that he would have to give and endure later in the day, as her Royal Highness put it."

What a time we had at the Neues Palais, when the Kaiser arrived with six bandboxes filled with "that woman's" selections of finery! Pardon: it is "that woman" no longer; we have discovered her name, and without consulting the Almanach de Gotha, at that. Perish the memory of Stephaine's treachery: "Her Royal Highness, the Princess Philip," of all women, has the sweetest taste and kindliest disposition! All-highest lips uttered these honeyed sentiments, and soon the whole *Schloss*, metaphorically speaking, was at the feet of the august Viennese, who, an hour before, had been considered too frivole for even casual mention.

Reputations are quickly made and lost at court. Play into their Majesties' hands, contribute to their charities, fawn upon their little weaknesses and you are persona grata in a jiffy: exhibit the slightest bit of originality conflicting with the maddening humdrum of accepted notons, seek solace from the dreary occupations of the average court life in hemispheres where goldsticks and bigwigs are not wanted, or, worse still, derided, and your name is put upon the index whether it stands on the first leaves of the continental peerage or not.

But once more let me repeat—whatever we may think

about this vain woman, her love for William is pathetic. When he is away on his travels, she sleeps with his photograph on the pillow where his blonde head ought to rest, the full length picture being stuck under the quilt up to the chin. When he is at home, she undergoes a thousand pains to make herself attractive according to his ever-varying notions.

CHAPTER VII

The world has a right to know the Hohenzollerns—though I realize that I am treading on delicate ground when I enter into the domestic relations in the Kaiser's household. But my many years as Chief of the Royal Household, qualify me to speak with authority.

I have already mentioned that the Kaiser, in his brusque egotism, showed very little respect for his wife and that she frequently confided her troubles, even to the extent of weeping over her unhappiness. His treatment of her is an index to his character. But I know that she loved him and was very jealous of him. He did not show himself capable of loving any one but himself.

The Kaiser is adored by his wife. That Augusta Victoria's love for him is only equalled by her fear of him is perhaps not his fault. He was heir to a mighty Crown when he married her—she, the daughter of a penniless pretender who had to sign away his hereditary rights to the Duchies of Schleswig and Holstein before the engagement was ratified by the old Kaiser, and Prussia granted him the indemnity of $75,000 per year, on which the family was struggling, and which the Schleswigs may lose bye and bye when the Allies put the financial screws on.

The consciousness of this humiliating bargain on the one hand, and of William's overpowering egotism on the other, have sufficed to make a wife, constitutionally not without energy, like wax in his hand.

Sitting one night in the Royal box at the Opera House with Duke Gunther of Schleswig, I heard him laugh immoderately at the remark of a stage hero, who being asked: "Do you ever quarrel?" briskly replied: "No, not if I have my own way."

"It reminds me so much of my beloved brother-in-law and sister," said His Highness; "they never fight because he sees to it that his slightest whims are obeyed, nay, more, anticipated."

That fits the case exactly: William forever enforcing his own will, his notions, his idiosyncrasies, and downright crazes by sheer force of sublime egomania; the Kaiserin perpetually in a flutter to carry out his demands and make everybody else dance to the imperial piper's tune!

I remarked that the Empress is very jealous of her husband. One day when the court was established in Berlin, I undertook to present to her Majesty "the all-submissive" compliments of the Countess Brockdorff, asking leave to be excused from second breakfast.

"Tell her Excellency that she has my permission, and with pleasure, and that nothing would suit me better than to have her and the whole lot of them stay away from my table all the year round," said Auguste Victoria, with a haughty shrug of the shoulders.

Being one of the "lot," I was surprised and vexed at this outburst. "If that remark was intended seriously, I beg to offer my resignation," I said, "and I am sure the Countess and other associates and all functionaries will follow suit, seeing that, for some unknown reason, we have had the misfortune to incur your Imperial Majesty's displeasure."

"No, no!" cried the Kaiserin; "I am very fond of you, and there is not one in the suite whom I dislike; but, Baroness, can you not see that a woman, even an Empress, wants her husband to herself once in a while?

"I have begged his Majesty a thousand times to take at least one meal beside breakfast alone with me and the children; I reminded him of the happy family life in his own father's house, where, except when guests were present, the Crown Prince and Princess and all the children occupied one table, while the suite sat at

another. So both master and retinue enjoyed perfect freedom at this pleasantest of rendezvous; but the Kaiser will not hear of it. To compare his court with that of his parents is as ridiculous as to liken the establishment of some petty contemporary Prince to that of Louis XIV, he says."

"According to the Duchess of Orleans, Charlotte Elizabeth of Bavaria, the Grand Monarque would have no one at his table but members of the Royal family," I observed.

The Empress rose excitedly. "Is that authentic?" she cried.

"Your Majesty will find it in the Duchess's memoirs, and no doubt, also, in some of her letters to the first Queen of Prussia, kept in our archives."

"I am under great obligations to you for these advices," said her Majesty, holding out her hand, which I kissed; "my good knesebeck shall look the matter up today—at once. Do not fail to send for him, I beg of you, when going out. But," continued the Royal lady, and the expression of her face fell, "will the Kaiser care one way or another? You know he thinks it due to his position to maintain a certain state at all times; and so our meals—the few we have together—are made semi-public functions by the presence of officials and strangers, while my poor children are perpetually kept up-stairs and hardly see their father."

"I am afraid the Kaiser will never take interest in the children until they actually enter military service," said the Empress to me, after I had read to her an article reporting his Majesty's speech on the occasion of Prince Adalbert's entry into the navy. Of course, I politely disagreed with her Majesty on that point, but at the same time could not help thinking it would be a good thing if these fears were realized.

Imagine a father taking his ten-year-old stripling by the hand, and, after presenting him to a regiment of gray-beards, say to them: "This moment, when

Prince Adalbert becomes one of you, is of the most eminent importance to the entire history of the Fatherland."

Who would blame a boy, after that, for overbearing conduct and disinclination for study? If, at the age of ten, he be a historic personage, to whom old and tried men must look up as to an idol, a molder of the nation's destinies, what is the use of further effort? Elagabalus became Roman Emperor at the age of fourteen yet had to wait four years before he was recognized as a god.

How did the Kaiser "spend" his time? I will quote a rough estimate, gathered from the Kaiser's printed calendars published for the benefit of court officials, body-servants, and newspapers, minutely setting forth how and where his Majesty spent his time, or was supposed to spend it. This seems to indicate that in the course of a year he is home about one hundred days—that is, for one hundred days he lives with her Majesty under the same roof; but this circumstance does not in any way indicate that their Majesties take their meals together, or even see each other daily, except in bed and at breakfast. I clip at random one of those daily programs:

9.15 a.m. Report by the chief of the military cabinet.

10.30 a.m. Report by the Chancellor.

12.30 p.m. Audience to newly-appointed army officers. Luncheon on the train.

2 p.m. Departure for hunt at Count Finkenstein's. At midnight, return to the Neues Palais.

Or take another day:

9 a.m. Review of the —— regiment on the Bornstedter Field.

1.30 p.m. Luncheon in the mess-room.

6 p.m. Dinner with the officers of the Garde du Corps. Hour of return not stated.

The reader perceives an interval of several hours between luncheon and dinner, which might be devoted

to wife and children; but it must not be forgotten that a person so continually on the move as the Emperor needs a corresponding amount of rest, repose, and freshening up, even though in the bright lexicon of William there may be no such word as knocking off. Unofficially, the Kaiser retired to his dressing-room after luncheon, went to his little bachelor bed, slept an hour and a half, and then jumped into a hot bath, followed by an ablution of cold sea-water. That, of course, put new vigor into him, and made him ready for the evening's campaign, but his family see him not in the interim.

While not particularly loving toward his wife, the Emperor honors her with excessive jealousy, and is beside himself with rage if a man-servant, ever so innocently, looks at her Majesty when she is dressed in a decollette costume. As Napoleon bounced M. Leroy, the Worth of his times, for complimenting Marie Louise on her fine shoulders, so William dealt unmercifully with officials and servants who ventured to look at his wife.

One day while the Kaiser was on the way to Dessau, her Majesty went to bed early in the afternoon out of sheer chagrin because she had not been allowed to accompany her husband, and, while reading a novel by lamp-light, she was disturbed by a stealthy noise at the door.

It made her sit up in eager expectation. Could it be possible that the Emperor had reconsidered his decision, and had returned to take her along at first promised? Augusta Victoria prepared to look extra charming; but who shall describe her terror, when, instead of the expected husband, the black curly head of a man-servant, bearing a load of fire-wood on his shoulder, appeared, and cautiously spied about to see if he might enter.

The Empress gave a scream of rage and agony, while a crash, as if a hundred-weight of sticks had

come to the ground, and hurrying footsteps, told the fate of the transgressor.

Several hours later the whole palace knew that Johann, the wood-boy, had been instantly dismissed without compensation for his loss of pension, and a bad "character" into the bargain, while next morning an autograph letter from his Majesty arrived, commanding that henceforth no male servant should enter the joint bedroom or the Kaiserin's dressing-room, all the work, including wood and water carrying, taking up of carpets, etc., being thrown upon the maids.

This incident had a sequel for, her Majesty being as fastidious about girls in her room (when the Kaiser is present) as William was about man-servants, was then obliged to make her own fire in the grate on chilly mornings whenever her husband was at home. What a parody on royal state this—the Empress-Queen getting up in the cold and damp, to light her own fire! Verily, truth is stranger by far than fiction!

The Kaiser detested his wife's relatives. He hated her mother—the usual "mother-in-law" situation. He quarreled with the Kaiserin over her kith and kin on frequent occasions.

One of these wrangles was over using, for family purposes, funds from the so-called "Imperial Disposition Fund," intended to afford relief to Prussian and German veterans of the wars and in case of great national disasters. As its name implies, the right of bestowing grants out of the three million marks, annually set aside for the purposes specified, is vested in the sovereign—reason enough for William who recognized no obligation that conflicted with his "all-highest" pleasure, to regard the money as a sort of augmentation of the civil list, in the same way as he took the naval phrases, "his Majesty's cruiser," "his Majesty's torpedo," etc., literally.

To convey a thorough understanding of this matter, we shall have to go back to events which I well recall.

It was my imperial mistress who, after the withdrawal of Count Zedlitz's common-school law, persuaded von Caprivi to remain in office.

"Votre petite guerre est fini," said the Emperor to her Majesty at supper, "and you have not been luckier than Madame Eugenie. Rest assured, though, that I will not be in the market again for any of Uncle Christian's ultra-Christian plans. No, we will not go to Cumberland Lodge a second time."

Her Majesty grew pale and blushed violently in rapid succession. Her bosom heaved, and some of the wine in the glass she was raising to her lips spilled over her superb gown.

"I do not quite understand, Willie," she said at last, lisping painfully in her agitation.

"Beg your Majesty's pardon," was the Kaiser's sarcastic reply; "I thought everybody knew by this time that I had to withdraw the Volksschulgesetz and turn Zedlitz adrift. My government was fast becoming the laughing stock of Europe with this Augustenburg sort of legislation, as Bismarck styles it."

"The old enemy of our house—" whimpered Augusta Victoria.

"You are mistaken in your surmisal: I am not quoting from the Hamburger Nachrichten. The Prince expressed himself thus toward your uncle Waldersee, pointing out at the same time the risks I was running in advocating a law liable to be associated in public opinion with petticoat and family influences."

I did not hear the whole of this conversation, and lost the rest of it altogether, as, by the Empress's request, William lowered his voice after this last sally; but her Majesty repeated it word for word when we ladies attended her in her dressing-room later on.

"The Kaiser chooses to put all the blame for this failure upon myself and my family," she said, amid a flood of tears; "but, by all that is holy to me, I swear, neither my uncle, nor I personally, had anything to

do with the launching of the Volksschulgesetz. Prince Christian, it is true, has endeavored to impress his Majesty with the importance of his religious duties as summus episcopus, and the two gentlemen have had conferences about the best ways and means to combat disbelief and atheism in Germany, but I am convinced that my uncle never ventured advice on matters of legislation. He merely tried to rouse my husband's interest in divine matters, as any ardent follower of the Lord should do. The Volksschulgesetz as such was the Kaiser's own creation, though some of the ideas incorporated in it might have come from across the channel."

"Your Majesty should not have minded the Kaiser's ill-humor," I ventured to say: "the attitude of Parliament and the press naturally angered him and——"

"I know, I know," interrupted Auguste Victoria; "I can forget everything but the words: 'We will not go to Cumberland Lodge a second time.' It was there, at my uncle's seat, that William and I fell in love with each other."

The Kaiser slept, on the night that followed Count Zedlitz's enforced resignation, in his little private bedroom, and next morning departed for Hubertusstock before her Majesty had arisen. That was enough to paint our gilded salons an ashen gray, in which the children, her Majesty's ladies, friends, and attendants, vanished as if behind a cloud. Auguste Victoria refused to be comforted: her husband had left her in a fit of irritation; the sovereign lady was seemingly incapable of turning her thoughts from the disquieting subject.

Life at Court ran in smooth channels for some weeks following the little family jar just described; the coroneted graphomaniacs who had embroiled the imperial couple in the nastiest sort of family dispute stopped writing after firing one more broadside of admiration and excuses, instead of distrust and calumny as before,

and the political horizon being unusually tranquil, the Kaiser and Kaiserin gave themselves up to the pleasures of the season, his Majesty hunting and speechifying, dining out and enjoying little trips, the Empress knitting and sewing for the orphan asylums and making other preparations for Christmas.

I recall an incident which shows how the Kaiser approached his children and nearly frightened them to death. Prince Adalbert, in his tender years, was a lieutenant in the marine, and his governor had taught him to exhibit interest in naval matters on all possible occasions. So, when he heard his father speak of "Uncle Henry's" forthcoming trip to "Grandma Victoria," he said, quickly: "Will you let uncle have the Hohenzollern?"

The Kaiser, who had been very pleasant at luncheon, and whose humor had continued in a happy mood while we were sipping our coffee in the Tassen Zimmer, suddenly changed his tone. Assuming the style of a severe preceptor, he made the frightened boy leave his mother's knee and "stand at attention."

"Under which title does the Hohenzollern rank in the marine lists?" he demanded.

"His Majesty's Aviso, the yacht Hohenzollern, at the Kaiser's exclusive disposal," reported the tiny lieutenant.

"Well, then," said the Emperor, "understand sir, no subject shall assume the Kaiser's privileges."

His Majesty had spoken so severely and with such excessive emphasis that the little Prince became frightened and had to be conducted from the room while the small assemblage of officials and guests sat about dispirited, a feeling of unrest having replaced the previous joviality.

There were always much bickering and tattle and petty disputes in the royal family. I recall William D. Howells' preface to the memoirs of Frederick the Great's "little sister" Wilhelmina, whom the American

author styles "Princess Royal of Prussia being one of the strongholds of Salic law." Howells tells us that the poor Margravine's father, "though rich and powerful, was coarse and mean in most things, and bullied the Queen quite like a King in pantomine." Does he really suppose that the ignoble practice of browbeating a sovereign lady begins and ends with the first Frederick William and the king-popinjays of mimicry?

Sympathizers of the monarchial system, who write of royal life under the direct influence of the august persons alleged to be portrayed, and litterateurs never permitted to invade the palace's sacred precincts, may agree with Howells, and it is certainly pleasant to do so, but candor compels me to destroy that cheerful illusion so far as it may apply to the Imperial Court of Berlin. "Willie" and "Dona" have their little unpleasantnesses and homely rows like any ordinary couple, and, what was quite self-evident in the Fatherland, the man always got the better of the weaker sex, Wilhelm's superior intellect, his impetuosity and unequivocal bluntness of speech, making his ascendency a foregone conclusion.

Besides, the Empress is deadly afraid of her lord, and readily capitulates whenever and wherever his Majesty signifies disapproval. And here the eternal sameness of royal and common folks is again emphasized —most of the quarrels between the imperial couple are occasioned by questions of dress, or the difficulties of paying for the same, which seemed destined, at one time, to become the source of really serious trouble in our menage.

Her Majesty frequently took an hour to prepare for the night, only to find "Willie" snoring softly when she came to bed. And, oh, the tears the imperial lady shed over her hands which, though proportionate to her body, cannot be coaxed to come up to the Kaiser's standard of beauty. If those tears were collected, as was the saltish sympathy of paid weepers at the ancient

Roman funerals, marry! they would fill quite as many bottles as are on her Majesty's dresser.

I have had occasion to speak of her Majesty's jealousy before this. When the Hoflager moved to the Marble Palace, where Princess Louise was born, the household had to get along without its official head, Baroness von Larisch, because myself happens to have beautiful hands and arms and, on that account, was much admired by his Majesty.

And a still more petty thing: Augusta Victoria confiscated a photograph of Queen Emma of the Netherlands which stood on the Emperor's desk. The Queen-Dowager was a most estimable lady, but it would be folly to call her pretty. Still, she had fine hands and everybody and everything liable to interest his Majesty had to go. At about this time the Kaiserin ordered the seamstresses, who occupied a little room overlooking the court-yard, to be dislodged. She trembled lest her husband, who was about to return from his Northland journey, should see one of the women at the window.

So great was her Majesty's confidence in Herr von der Knesebeck, that, if at all possible, she submitted to him every little matter, either verbally or in writing. In the course of a year, Empress and chamberlain exchanged hundreds of letters, some of the Kaiserin's being five and six pages long.

Bodo Knesebeck saved the Empress from making herself ridiculous, and from seriously compromising her husband and the government during the Berlin riots some years ago. Incidentally the chamberlain saved our mistress from her lord's lasting displeasure on that occasion, which probably counts more with her than anything else. For weeks we had prepared for the great carnival ball when the invited gentlemen were to appear for the first time in English court-dress, an event William looked forward to no less eagerly than a girl does to her debut in long frocks.

For the ball, the late King's favorite, premiere ball-

erina Marie Koebisch-Wolden, had arranged a gorgeous revival of that most graceful dance, menuet a la reine, which was to be tripped before the throne when the evening's festivities were at their height. My mistress meant to surpass all her previous efforts in the matter of personal adornment.

At last the festive day had come. Early in the morning the entire stock of crown-jewels, all excepting the crown itself, were brought to the royal dressing-room, and her Majesty, Countess Brockdorff, and Frau von Haake spent hours making and remaking new combinations of the stones and ornaments, most of which can be put to various uses, as pins, buttons, buckles, brooches, etc. Then, all of a sudden, the cry ran through the *Schloss*' chambers! "Berlin is in revolt!"

"There will be no minuet, rather a Carmagnole," lamented the anxious; "instead of beribboned and belaced silk coats, the 'blouse;' in place of honeyed words and pretty toy swords, 'pipe in cheek, loaded canes on thigh,' as in the days when they sang 'Vive le son du canon.'"

Baron Mirbach sent me to my mistress to prepare her for noisy scenes in the neighborhood of the *Schloss*. I found the Empress in the room facing the great fountain, running excitedly from one window to the other. In the square below, people were assembling in groups, talking and gesticulating.

I delivered the message and, of my own accord, added: "His Majesty will not drive out this morning."

"And if he loves me, he will remain, he must remain with us until this awful revolution is quelled."

"I entreat your Majesty to be calm," I made bold to say, as Countess Brockdorff kept silent; "according to the papers, these people want bread and want work; they have no thought of violence. Besides," I said, "Herr von Richthofen has sent the entire police reserves to the *Schloss*. There are fifty men at each

entrance, and more guarding the cellar-openings and the waterside. All the corridors are patrolled, and a dozen men are on the lookout on the roof."

"The roofs," cried the Empress, as if swayed by a new fear. "Oh, Grafin" (this to Countess Brockdorff), "they may throw bombs on the roof and destroy us all! I must go to the Kaiser at once."

Second breakfast commenced half an hour earlier than usual, and we hurried through its four courses, following their Majesties' example. The Kaiserin's eyes were red with crying, and some minutes before dessert the children came in, a thing that does not happen more than once or twice a year. His Majesty loved his little ones in his own way; that is, he liked to keep them at a distance. If brought into personal contact with the youngsters, his sense of decorum revolted and he did not know what to do with them, except to criticise their dress or military demeanor.

"I am not going on a journey," he said, and, looking at the Crown Prince, added: "You and your brothers have not come to say good-bye?" The Empress bowed her head and whispered something while the Kaiser leaned over the table, holding his hand to his ear.

"Dummes Zeug," he said, loud enough for all to hear, and pushed back his chair; "I am riding out as I do every day in the year; there is no use making a scene, 'Dona'!" He kissed some of the children, fondled the heads of the younger ones, and drawing the Empress's arm through his own, walked out, preceded by the house-marshal and his adjutants.

When, a quarter of an hour later, the Empress came from his room, she declared: "Thank God, the Kaiser will take his pistols along, one in the right pocket of his trousers, and one in his coat pocket." Then her Majesty led the way to the state apartments, where we took our stand at the windows of the Knights' Hall to see William ride from Portal V a few minutes later.

As he passed, his Majesty looked up, and the Empress followed him along the front of the *Schloss* through the Black Eagle chamber, the Red Velvet chamber, and the old chapel. As we crossed over to the windows of the picture-gallery, he waved his hand for the last time.

Strange to say he was without his ordinary escort of grooms and gendarmes. Merely Adjutant von Moltke and one other military gentleman accompanied him.

The Kaiserin was beside herself. "He will be killed, I know he will be killed, and myself and the children will come next. Let us flee from this room, in front of which, as the Kaiser says, kingship was put to the greatest indignities."

Her Majesty ran to her own apartment, and through the speaking-tube ordered that all her children be brought down at once.

"See there, there!" cried the Empress, "I told you this was a revolution. The crowds are getting thicker and thicker; they will overthrow the police and then attack the palace. And the Kaiser is away. We must go at once. Our only safety lies in flight."

"Fetch Knesebeck," I whispered to Mademoiselle von Gersdorff; "he alone can set our mistress right. We shall all be disgraced if this mad plan is carried out. Be quick, before that toad-eating Keller drives the Kaiserin thoroughly crazy."

Herr von der Knesebeck appeared after a little while, suave and smiling as usual. He did not exasperate her Majesty by underrating the danger. He pointed out to her that the *Schloss* was the safest place for herself, her children, and her jewels.

"Then you think we are really safe?"

"Safe?" laughed Herr von der Knesebeck—"Your Majesty is pleased to joke. Would the Kaiser leave you and the Princes if there was a shadow of danger within ten thousand miles?"

The children clamored loudly for an outing. They

had been locked in the house for three days, and confinement was telling on the little ones. But her Majesty would not hear of the proposed carriage ride. Only after Major von Falkenhayn had patrolled the streets in citizen's dress to ascertain the popular animus, and reported that the riotous movement had entirely subsided, were the children sent to the Thiergarten in an old carriage, driven by a man in every-day clothes and preceded by ditto grooms on horseback, who were to keep well ahead and communicate with the police along the route.

In former years when the Kaiserin and her sister, Princess Frederick Leopold, were on friendly terms, Auguste Victoria used to take sides with her brother-in-law against the widowed Princess; but at the time of which I write she and Sophie Louise hardly spoke, her Majesty giving her dislike to Baron Wangenheim as an excuse for neglecting her amiable grandaunt. Some little time before Frederick Leopold's wedding, the Kaiser mentioned to her Majesty that, in a month or so, Aunt Marie would be without a roof over her head. "She is of opinion that I have to provide her with a suitable home," he said.

"Is it possible?" The Empress, who always acts as if she had never known poverty, raised her eyes in astonishment. "Perhaps she aspires to Babelsberg or Charlottenburg, or perhaps she wants me to give up the Marble Palace for her accommodation."

"Calm yourself," replied the Emperor; "I have already decided what to do. I told her she could have rooms at Bruhl."

"Bruhl?" queried the Empress; "where is that?"

This ignorance vexed William. "In Southwest Africa, near Klein-Popo," he said, brusquely, and left her Majesty and her ladies blushing.

Selfishness is the curse of the domestic relations of the Hohenzollerns. Moreover, the Kaiser is a "bully" in his family. Trouble starts in the morning at the

stroke of 6.30, 7, or 7.30 o'clock, when their Majesties emerge from their room. The Kaiser, in pajamas and sporting a jaunty cap, makes at once for his bath, while the Empress, clad only in a woolen wrapper and heelless slippers, ascends to the nursery, where her youngest little ones sleep under care of three or four maids.

If the Kaiser and Kaiserin intended to go for a drive after breakfast, the older children were ordered down to kiss their mother and read a chapter from some devotional book before her. It was a pretty custom, that lacks not impressiveness, and even the lower domestics, who, working in the corridor, cannot help observing the scene in the dressing-room, are deeeply moved by it, but stern reality only too often interferes with its popular conclusion.

"Wheez!" goes the speaking-tube. The Kammerdiener of his Majesty announces to the Kammerdiener of her Majesty that his master has been pleased to enter the breakfast-room, or to step down to the Apollo Hall on the first floor, where sometimes the early repast is served.

The effect the message invariably produced would be amusing if the poor maids were not the scapegoats. Empress, Princess, and domestics all fled and fluttered about like so many frightened chicks; the children were instantly dismissed, and her Majesty's sharp reprimands spurred the anxious woman to hasty effort.

"The Kaiser is waiting!" It sounds to those who know him best almost like news of a serious ailment or misfortune threatening the head of the government.

At any rate, the Empress usually managed to catch up with her august lord within five or six minutes at the very latest, and the Fatherland is once more safe.

Even their worst enemy, the Prince of Reuss-Greitz-Kranichfeld-Gera Lobenstein, etc., Henry XXII, he of the Elder Branch, cannot charge the Emperor and Empress of Germany with being gourmets. Though the

breakfast consists of four or five courses, including meats, eggs, different kinds of breads and cakes, stewed fruits and marmalades, refined taste would find little of it palatable, grease and the frying-pan being too much in evidence.

Unless the Emperor was free to take her for a walk or drive, the Kaiserin devoted herself to her children after breakfast. They promenade in the park together or amuse themselves in-doors with readings or games, and romance-spinning being one of her Majesty's strong points, the boys and the little daughter never grow weary listening to the old tales of Grimm and Andersen.

But soon, only too soon for the youngsters, the various governors of the puny Royal Highnesses say it is time to begin with the lessons. Expressions of regret, all round prayers for just one more glimpse into fairyland, for permission to take a spin on the bicycle or look after the ponies—all chattering at once, kisses, embraces, tears even; but a word from the Kaiserin's lips settles the whole litter; "I will tell papa." And the stripplings that expected to command battles in a dozen years or so, scattered after a hasty good-bye.

How often have I been importuned to allow visitors just one peep into this sanctum sanctorum of the Kaiser and his frau—their bedroom. But, of course, no such request could be granted, even were it accompanied by the offer of the richest diamond in the world.

But now that the Emperor and his Empress are plain Mr. and Mrs. William Hohenzollern it may be permissible to describe their more intimate relationship when they resided in the palace—in fact called some fifty palaces their home.

Napoleon, the first of modern kings, insisted upon keeping imperial Marie Louise under lock and key after she had retired; the only entrance to her room was through a chamber in which the first lady-in-waiting slept, whose bed, moreover, had to be curtainless, so

that the Emperor, when passing, might see whether she was alone; but in Potsdam and Berlin the heads of a mighty nation slept together as unceremoniously and as comfortably, let us hope, as any Herr and Frau Burgomaster or citizen of even lesser importance in the Fatherland.

I will take you into their Majesties' bedroom. It opens by a richly ornamental folding door into the Kaiserin's study on the second floor of the Neues Palais. It has two high windows, and is lofty and spacious, but sadly lacks the harmony in color and general furnishings that is the main charm of a really beautiful apartment, such as this is intended to be.

Indeed, the Kaiserin tired of it long ago, and would gladly have exchanged its treasures, one and all, for new things, though the room was fitted up entirely at her own suggestion. What first upset the Empress was the ultra graceful and exquisite style of Neu-Glienecke, the property of her brother-in-law and sister, Prince and Princess Frederick Leopold of Prussia, the richest of the Hohenzollerns.

This castle, situated near Potsdam, was rebuilt soon after William's enthronement, and having thoroughly redecorated and refitted the palace in the latest and most sumptuous manner, their Royal Highnesses gave a house-warming. From this her Majesty returned in high dudgeon, and, on entering her own bedroom, where I was busy arranging some flowers, she exclaimed: "How pauvre it all looks! If one judged mine and Louise's positions from our surroundings I might be taken for a mere appanaged princess, while my sister would easily pass for the Kaiserin. She has everything of the latest—the German Empress must content herself with the remnants of centuries scattered among Berlin-made show-pieces."

A right royal couch was that in which, during the first years of their reign, the Emperor and Empress slept—magnificent and stately, a fitting companion-

piece, with its canopy and curtains, to that world-famed four-poster, the Bed of Ware, which could be enclosed on all sides by tapestries, and whereto the King and Queen retired in full sight of all their retainers lying around on the straw-covered floor with doublets and petticoats for pillows, and "full of good wine each mother's son and daughter of them."

How the Kaiser liked this old bed, with its heraldic designs, and upholstered side-pieces, whereon he could sit comfortably, smoking a cigarette and reading a novel by the light of the single wax candle standing on a little table near his end of the couch! But, lo! "those Frederick Leopolds" acquired modern English bedsteads, and, womanlike, Augusta Victoria would not allow her sister to eclipse her in being up to date.

So one fine day the lying-in beds were ordered home from Charlottenburg castle, their usual storage-place, and, the antique couch being sent up-stairs, these things of brass and the mode were put up near the windows, to the intense alarm of the physicians, who feared they had made another miscalculation, and of relatives and friends who anticipated a catastrophe like that following the Pasewalk review. Of course, it was a false alarm, and our pretty Princess Louise was "regularly born" on September 13, 1892.

That the Emperor, at the bottom of his heart, had his doubts as to the propriety of using a common factory-made bedstead as the cradle of kings, is evident from the fact that for some time these brass affairs had to be removed every morning, while in their place the Elizabethan couch was set up; but the order, which evoked no end of dissatisfaction among the servants, gradually fell into disuse, and in later days the triumph of brass over stately splendor was complete.

As every domestic arrangement in the palace was fashioned with a view insuring the preservation of the Kaiser's health, the doors and windows near the imperial bed are doubly screened by heavy portieres,

summer and winter; for the faintest possibility of draughts was dreaded, and even the down quilts and blankets were so fastened at the bottom and sides that their Majesties must needs crawl into bed one leg at a time, there being only a breadth of about twenty inches left open.

Before the imperial couple retired our household went through a series of routine work. Above all, his Majesty's nickel warming-pan must be heated to the proper degree and placed at his, the right side of the bed. That was done all the year round, except in July and August. Next, folding screens were so placed as to surround the bed on all sides, and woe to the chamber-woman who forgot to draw any of the numerous curtains, portieres and other devices for excluding a breath of air. For cases of emergency, a pair of long woolen stockings, white cloth knickerbockers, jack-boots, a flannel-lined pea-jacket, soft hat and gloves must be placed ready on one corner of the lounge—that is at the foot of the bed, and a similar " accident toilet " was provided for her Majesty.

I recall an amusing experience which shows that queens are very human after all. The Kaiser was absent at the manoeuvres with the King of Saxony. Her Majesty, to kill time, which never hangs more heavily upon her hands than when her lord is away from home, conceived the idea of painting the basket settees in the Kaiser's bedroom a bright lilac. It was to be a surprise for William upon his return.

" Before we go to bed, I will ask the Kaiser to sit down in his favorite seat for a moment, and then I will suddenly turn up the lamps, exhibiting my work. Won't he be pleased? " her Majesty had remarked to Fraulein von Gersdorff.

The latter acquiesced, as a matter of course, and both ladies started in upon the task at once, spoiling many pairs of gloves, besides their dresses and a carpet

worth a whole regiment of wicker chairs. But this mattered little, seeing that, after several cans of mixed paint and a bottle of turpentine had been consumed, the chef-d' oeuvre was complete. It was the day before William was expected back.

"But will they be dry in time?" asked the Dame of the Court, Grafin Keller, when all the ladies of her Majesty had been called together to view this first attempt at household decoration.

"Certainly," said the Kaiserin, with a laugh: "Kammerdiener Luck made inquiries for me at the paint store, and I followed the directions to the letter."

Next evening their Majesties retired. The Empress's little program seems to have worked to perfection till—but let her Majesty tell her own story.

"No sooner were the lights on," reported Augusta Victoria to her first Lady, Countess Brockdorff, the following day, "and while I myself was settling down in the second chair than I saw the Emperor start up half surprised, half angry, with his hands and other portions of his body thickly besmeared with pigment that, I felt to my horror, also adhered to my body.

"'This is a sorry joke,' he shouted in high temper. And neither explanations nor excuses were of the slightest avail.

"'Ring for turpentine.' That is all he would say.

"I awakened Haake, and told her to order the imperial housekeeper to send up a bottle of the stuff; but, needless to say, she had none on hand. Then the Emperor demanded that one of the body gendarmes ride into town and fetch a bottle. Like a simpleton, he awakened the apothecary only to be told that he must go to a drug store. Drug stores, as you know, have no night-bells, and are not obliged to serve customers after the ordinary closing time. It took the gendarme a full hour to get what he wanted, and even then he was obliged to invoke aid from a military patrol.

"The next thirty or forty minutes I spent in cleansing my lord's legs, arms and hands, and afterward poor Haake had to do the same for me. It was the most miserable night I ever experienced."

These intimate little glimpses give us a true view of the real William Hohenzollern.

CHAPTER VIII

What we are now to reveal requires explanations—if not apology. But we are pledged to tell "the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth" about William Hohenzollern—the exiled Kaiser of Germany—and this requires us to reveal phases of his character about which we should prefer to remain silent. This silence, however, would be unjust to the world; it would, in fact, be a deliberate attempt to conceal important facts and thus protect him from his own conduct. William Hohenzollern is entitled to no such suppression of the truth. He has placed himself before the cold scrutiny of history and must stand the consequences—every detail of his life belongs to the public—thus we are forced to give historical record to the former Emperor's conduct in the imperial court; his customs and habits; his interpretation of public morals; his attitude toward and his responsiblity to society. The only defense that we can extend to him is that he acted upon the axiom: "The King can do no wrong!"—that the King is law; that laws are only made for the people; and that the King is not subject to either the law of God or man. This undoubtedly is the Hohenzollern doctrine, and the creed of its morals and religion.

Those observations cover the period of his early life and reveal nothing of affairs within the last few years, which might incriminate many living personages. Let us begin at the beginning. What was the fundamental conception of moral obligations with which William Hohenzollern began life? And what was the nature of this moral development?

I was told when I entered the court that as a young prince among men of his own caste and age, William had but one intimate, the late Rudolph of Austria; but the pleasant relations between these young men, based upon mutual likes and dislikes, came to an abrupt end some four years previous to the Archduke's awful death, discord arising when Prince and Princess William were spending several weeks at their Imperial Highnesses' country-place near Vienna. From this outing the Princess returned all of a sudden and post-haste to Potsdam, while her husband went on an impromptu tour of military inspection in the provinces.

And the reason?

Princess Philip of Coburg, sister of the Archduchess Stephanie, told me that William, returning in her brother-in-law's company from a stag party late one evening, proposed a game, which, her Royal Highness insists, is "quite common" among German officers. . . . (Deleted by the editors.)

Next morning the young wives got together; but as each charged the other's husband with instigating the devilish plot, the happy family party was bound to break up, and the worthy of each other separated without saying good-by. Such, at least, was common report at the court of Empress Augusta in Coblenz, where I happened to be at the time.

As for the rest, it will probably never be known which of the royal gentlemen incited the act; maybe both were drunk and agreed upon the dictum of Prusssian army men: "Among pals it's all the same," as a good joke.

(This testimony of the next episode is related here also with apologies; it becomes essential, however, to give history its correct judgment.)

My next experience in the Emperor's court was when the household was upset by the receipt of an anonymous letter, written to the Empress. I will tell more about these anonymous letter scandals later—but here let me mention this one:

"Madame," wrote the anonymous correspondent, "do you know what is the difference between you and Maria Leczinska? Her children died while Louis the Fifteenth's illegitimate offspring flourished. To-day the Kaiser's Vienna baby is dead. I wonder if for the same reason which the physician of his Most Christian Majesty assigned for the demise of the Queen's children?"

That cruel letter, cruel, yet consoling in more than one way, arrived when the anonymous letter scandal was at its height and the little waif was about twelve months old.

Her mother was a beauteous Viennese, Fraulein Caroline Seiffert, one of the late Crown Prince Rudolph's set.

Madame von Kotze insisted that it was a spite-baby. (I will tell you more about Madame von Kotze later.)

"And what on earth is a spite-baby?" I inquired.

"They had been making fun of Caroline—his Majesty, then Prince William, and the Prince Imperial —'as a little idiot, who didn't know enough to have a child;' but like the first Napoleon's love, Marguerite Bellisle (the girl General Bonaparte had with him in Egypt, or rather took away from one of his officers there), the Vienna beauty said: 'I will show them who the idiot is.'"

Her child was born, two or three weeks after Eitel Fritz, the Kaiser's second son, saw the light at the Marble Palace.

I remembered the circumstances perfectly, and my question to Madame von Kotze was merely asked to help clear up, if possible, the authorship of the unsigned communications that had kept their Majesties and the court in a turmoil for two years. I was one of many in the royal service and society generally who did not believe the Kotzes guilty, and have never had occasion to change this opinion. Jealousy was alleged to be the mainspring of the scandal,—Madame von Kotze's jealousy of Countess Fritz Hohenau's ascen-

dency over the Kaiser. I put the question to disabuse my mind of any suspicions of that sort.

To return to William's infatuation for Mademoiselle Seiffert. That story was well known to the intimates of the late Crown Prince's circle. (Afterward Emperor Frederick.)

"Unser Fritz" did not mind it much. Having been kept well in hand by his "Vicky" all through life, I suspect he even took some mischievous delight in his son's escapade, as his visit to the court of the late Alphonso XII, so rich in adventure, proved.

But in the Princess Imperial's eyes a liasion was little short of a crime. Pictures of the fourth George and Mrs. Fitz-Herbert, she told me once, arose before her mental eyes every time she thought of the matter. At that period, be it remembered, the history of Prince and Princess William's marriage was as fresh in everybody's memory as it is now obscure,—as fresh as were the incidents attending George's courtship with Caroline of Brunswick during the first ten years after Europe's gentleman par excellence had reeled into the Chapel Royal and hiccoughed out his vows of fidelity.

Augusta Victoria was a much-abused woman then, though carrying out her part of the marriage agreement —to provide new Hohenzollerns—with the utmost loyalty. Indeed, so frequent were the stork's visits in the household that the wife was unable to appear at the great court festivals for three winters in succession, while her husband, full of resentment for his consort-by-statecraft, shamefully ignored her. And to crown it all—this Vienna scandal!

Primarily it was the outcome of the friendship between the two heirs destined to wear the most ancient and the newest imperial diadems (Germany and Austria —allied for the Great War which was to upset the world). Being of the same age, and possessed of temperaments whose selfishness was only equalled by thirst for power, both commanded, if not much ready

money, unlimited credit for certain extravagances. Rudolph, however, was far ahead of William in the knowledge of fashionable vice.

In the Potsdam archives I came upon a stack of letters from the representatives of Prussia at the Vienna Congress, denouncing a state of morals that permitted the sons of the great Austrian nobles to keep mistresses at the age of thirteen or fourteen years. Similar observations might be made of the Vienna of the nineties —and Rudolph was more than a noble!

The two young princes, then twenty-four and twenty-five years old, considered it fun to revel in debauches with the official world and society looking on, and the possibility of bothersome consequences was invited rather than dreaded by these hopeful roués.

Yet, when Mademoiselle Seiffert's telegram arrived in Berlin, Prince William did not feel in the devil-may-care mood that had led him into the adventure, and his first serious misunderstanding with his sister Charlotte arose on account of a clever bit of poetry cited by her Royal Highness " in honor of the occasion," as she expressed herself.

" Vater werden ist nicht schwer,
Aber's sein um desto mehr."

Translated: To become a father is easy enough, but to be one is different.

Caroline was not sentimental about the affair. Unlike Marie Vecsera, she had never dreamed of a diadem, or even a coronet to gloss over her fall. Only by a short telegram sought she to reopen communication with the father; her next step was to formulate her demands at the German Embassy in her native city.

There were frantic messages from Prince Reuss, husband of the catty and imperious Marie: " I am neither a Beauharnais nor a Talleyrand," he wrote. " What have I to do with this affair? "

However, Prince Bismarck, who was friendly to both Reuss and William, at last persuaded the Ambassador to look into the case.

"A hundred thousand florins," said Mademoiselle Seiffert, according to diplomatic correspondence relating to the case.

(This evidence at least gives an historical insight into the moral codes of the Imperial Governments of Germany and Austria.)

Every time his Majesty visited the Austrian capital he received hundreds of letters from countesses and princesses who fairly threw themselves at his feet, for, under the shadow of the Hofburg, husbands are of the amiable type that never interfere so long as they, the lords of creation, are allowed to please themselves.

"Your Majesty has the most beautiful eyes;" "The holy fire of idealism burns in your eyes: let them rest upon your Majesty's humblest subject;" "Your eyes are those of a King: allow my poor self to bask in their sunshine but for ever so short a while," are extracts from epistles the Kaiser brought home from time to time and read to her Majesty.

It was because of these incidents, and the natural jealousy of the Kaiserin, that the Berlin court became as notorious for the ugliness of its female members as that of the old Emperor and Empress was for beauties.

The Empress, my august mistress (as I have described) is jealousy personified, and not only surrounded herself with a chain of passe and sour dames, but treated women of the aristocracy who possess attractions that might possibly captivate the Kaiser, with such exquisite and cunning ill-grace that they were obliged to keep away from court as often as etiquette permitted.

With the exception of Countess Bassewitz, who was young and pretty of face, all her Majesty's ladies belonged to the old guard, and if, perchance, a good-looking girl was engaged for the higher duties of the

household where the Emperor was liable to meet her, Augusta Victoria soon found ways and means to rid the palace of that ray of sunshine. Either the young person was driven to hand in her resignation by those arts which jealous women understand so well, or was transferred to some distant residence which the imperial master never visited.

Fair chambermaids even were subject to this rule, and I could give quite a long list of lowly members of our menage who were banished from Berlin merely because her Majesty thought their noses too finely modelled, or their hair too luxurious.

All the unhappy traits Thackeray ascribes to Queen Charlotte were brought in to play when Augusta Victoria's jealousy was aroused. She became invincible in matters of etiquette and angry with her people who, in the service, suffered ill-health. A pin out of place, or a moment's absence from duty, threw her into a towering passion on such occasions. She was unkind, unjust and not above excusing her hatred of poor sinners, such as we all are, by religious scruples. At all times the Kaiserin was a much more gracious mistress to homely dependents of her own sex than to good-looking ones; and when they were old, into the bargain, she could be really delightful to them.

" Why this is not the court my father and uncles have been telling me about," said the Emperor of Russia, then Czarovitch, to the Duke of Schleswig, when he visited Berlin a year before Czar Alexander's death.

(This is the late Nicholas, who lost his life in the Great War—murdered by his own people—the Bolsheviki that the Kaiser employed in a conspiracy to break down the power of Russia.)

" At home," continued Nicholas, " they talked quite enthusiastically of beauties that basked in the shadow of the Prussian throne, and whom the old Queen and Princesses were generous enough to countenance."

" Yes, yes," laughed his Highness, the tall Gunther,

" that is one of ' Dona's ' weak points. She will not suffer a handsome face within ten miles of her house. It has always been a wonder to me why she keeps Bassewitz."

" Perhaps to prove the rule," suggested Nicholas, and the Kaiserin's big brother, who is not endowed with a surplus of sense, thought the remark brilliant enough to circulate it among all his intimates.

" Have you ever seen a richer appareled and homelier lot of women than the entourage of her Majesty of Germany? " asked a celebrated Moscow surgeon at a dinner given to visiting foreign physicians. None of them had.

At last a little man with coal-black eyes and a scraggy, shoe-string moustache spoke up. " Yes," he said, in choice pigeon English—" at the drawing-room of the Queen of Corea. They were dirtier, too." The speaker was a Japanese.

When this story came to Kaiser William's ears, he hawked it about for many days at second breakfast, dinner and supper, in the adjutant's room, in the parlor and audience-chamber, pronouncing it the cleverest thing out—under his breath, of course, for it was to be kept from the Empress.

This is a sample of the treatment the Kaiser meted out to his wife's ladies. He seemed to take a fiendish delight in teasing the " old guard," and only occasionally had a good word to say to Countess Bassewitz. Fraulein von Gersdorff, who grew stouter as she grew older, often served as a target for the Emperor's wit. So he insisted, at the decoration of the Christmas trees, that the Gersdorff mount a step-ladder and fasten a papier-maché angel on top of the tree. Naturally, my fat friend offered many excuses with her profoundest courtesies, but the Kaiser cut her short with a brusque, " I know you are bow-legged; valet climb up."

(We present these episodes only to show the true nature of German " kultur "—they are the strongest

exposure of coarseness in disguise of culture. There was no refinement in the German court clique.)

On another occasion (it was before the advent of Countess Bassewitz) the Kaiserin said one evening when the court was assembled in the Tassen Zimmer to kill the hours that intervened between after supper and bedtime with the usual dreary conversation: "I wonder why none of my ladies marry. Perhaps they do not go out enough. What do you think, Willie?"

"Pshaw!" answered the Emperor gruffly, "I think these ladies have all the freedom they want. Why cannot they get husbands? Ask the next looking-glass."

When I first entered the German court I found Madame von Kotze was the favorite. William first took her up in the beginning of the eighties, when his marriage to Augusta Victoria "made him hungry for the society of a clever and audacious woman," as Count Herbert Bismarck once expressed himself.

"He has engaged a Marechale de Prusse for his awkward better-half," continued his Excellency with a sneering allusion to the bargain enacted between Du Barri and Madame La Marechale de Mirepoix (who for a consideration of a hundred thousand francs per annum, taught the gorgeous woman the ways of polite society), "and the Countess does it all for the love of Christ, or *pour le roi de Prusse*, which is the same thing. Likewise he wants somebody to make him forget the ennui that reigns in his palace."

It was to Madame von Kotze that Augusta Victoria often referred when she charged his Majesty with a weakness for brunettes. They fought the "Hungarian pork-raiser's daughter," as someone had dubbed her, in the salon, the menage, on the slippery parquet of the royal ballroom, whenever she showed her saucy, piquant face. Ah, that face! It was not broad and placid; her fine, white shoulders were not quite fleshy enough to suit the Teuton female critic. And she had black, curly hair, the Kaiser's favorite that was! That is almost a

crime; for are not her Majesty and her friends blondes, and was he himself not rather carroty and therefore naturally inclined to brunettes.

However, the royal lady's contemptuous treatment of the object of her jealousy, the scenes the Kaiserin made for William, and the pin-thrusts of coroneted envy were alike powerless to bring about a change in the friendship between Madame von Kotze and the sovereign, though the battle raged for ten years or longer.

His Majesty made it plain that he liked Madame von Kotze, and she was, consequently, a conspicuous figure at all entertainments, stately or of a semi-private nature. Being the wife of one of the high court functionaries, the " pork-raiser's daughter " sat at the same table with crowned heads and the proud possessors of sixteen or thirty-two quarterings of nobility.

More than once the Emperor himself took her in to dinner, and at informal suppers, after musicales or similar excuses for organized ennui, his Majesty never failed to " command " her Excellency to his table. On such occasions the Emperor and Empress invited their company by sending a page to the favored ones, her Majesty selecting the men, and the Kaiser the ladies most to their liking.

At the court balls her Ladyship was likewise much in evidence. Being rich in her own right, and having increased her fortune enormously by marriage, Madame ranked as one of the smartest dressers. She was a good talker, quick at repartee and full of Gallic wit.

" Your Royal Highness's inspecteuse des jambes reports for duty." With these words, Madame von Kotze greeted William at the beginning of the second carnival ball as he stood conversing with some dowagers on the steps of the throne in the White Hall.

I should not believe it possible had I not heard the words myself; still I confess the jolly mockery of the woman's voice, the innocent look on her face took away much of the coarseness of the expression.

William had seemingly not been in the happiest of moods until then. At the approach of Madame von Kotze, his face lit up, and, taking the pretty woman's arm, he bowed with a little sneer before the elder ladies as he withdrew with his fair escort.

And so they strolled along, he in his gold-braided hussar uniform, the fur-edged attila over his shoulder to hide his poor left hand; the woman, who set herself the task of amusing the King, walking briskly by his side, laughing and gesticulating.

"An oriental face," said the Prince von Salm-Horstmar, and a dozen people seconded his Grace's remarks. It was all over the brilliant hall, with its crystal chandeliers and purple and gold hangings, lit up by thousands of wax candles. "An oriental face—but so was that of Cleopatra." The simile was far-fetched. Where was the Cæsar, and where was Antony, not to mention Cæsar Junior?

During the war this same Salm-Horstmar distinguished himself by advocating the utter ruin of Belgium and France. Likewise the ruin of England by invasion.

The couple walked through all the rooms quite alone, for his Royal Highness had hinted to his adjutants that they were de trop. At supper, in the Königinnen Zimmer, I was seated at the table reserved for the Princess Imperial, who, however, had decided to go home at the last moment. Near by was Prince William's table, at which Madame von Kotze presided, and where all the princes and "bloods" present enjoyed the heir presumptive's hospitality.

How they laughed and joked: "Why don't you dance?" asked one of the cavaliers.

"Because it gives me palpitations."

And then somebody told the anecdote of Marie Antoinette, who, one evening, when waltzing at Petit Trianon with Count Dillon, the beautiful Dillon, as he was called, stood still and said: "You should feel my heart."

"Pst! not so loud," said Frau von Kotze, with a side glance to another part of the room, where Baroness von Reischach, nee Princess Ratibor, was supping with the Countess of Hidveg, both stars of many tableaux vivants.

"But your report, Madame inspecteuse," began Prince of Ratibor, now dead, the same who turned housebreaker for the love of an Emperor's daughter, "we insist upon a report, and a minute one."

"Well," replied Madame von Kotze, with comic grandezza, "we were not overpleased with the new fashion, were we, your Royal Highness?"

William nodded. "Your Ladyship will proceed," he said; "do not keep these studious young men waiting."

(It is deemed advisable to expurgate the rest of this royal conversation.)

* * * * *

You may be sure Augusta Victoria learned all about this talk, and perhaps a little more than was actually spoken, but to no other purpose than to instil impotent rage in the unhappy mother, and make her even more suspicious of and disagreeable to good-looking women in and out of the palace.

One of the chief agitators against Madame von Kotze, and every other handsome face, for that matter, was the grandmistress Countess Brockdorff, who once betrayed her practices to the amusement of the whole court. Shortly after we had moved from Potsdam to Berlin *Schloss*, an informal note addressed by the Countess to her Majesty fell into the hands of one of the housemaids. It happened in this way: her Majesty, as I have explained, was in the habit of writing orders and complaints, intended for the officials, on small bits of paper which she tore from a book. Now, her Excellency's note happened to be written on a similar sheet, and so it got mixed with the rest.

The note contained the names of persons who had handed in requests for audience. Last on the list was

the name of Madame von Kotze, and opposite it the remark, three times underlined: "Refused." Then followed this sentence: "All's well that ends well." (Signed) Theresa Brockdorff.

Of course, this note, indicating exactly how the wind was blowing in the upper regions, had no sooner been read in the marshal's office than its contents were on everybody's lips. Most of the courtiers were honest enought to see the point of the attack (for, after all, the mixing up of papers was not wholly accidental); but the Schrader faction, that is, the friends of Master of Ceremony von Schrader, the same who was afterward shot and killed by von Kotze, would not have it so. They insisted that there was some mysterious connection between the refusal of an audience and the anonymous letters.

It took the camarilla ten years to dislodge Madame von Kotze, a long space of time even for Germany, but it must be remembered that her Ladyship was not the only favorite. There were more thorns, so that the efforts of Augusta Victoria's champions were necessarily divided.

Charlotte, Countess von Hohenau, was second on the list of charmers who boasted of William's friendship without fear of compromising her position.

(This next escapade is but another witness to the chimera of German upper-class "kultur"—and the type of unrefined social aspirants, who gathered about the Kaiser—from his own choice.)

The young noblewoman, the daughter of a rich landowner, Herr von der Decken, became the Kaiser's cousin-german by her marriage to the son of his great uncle, Prince Albert of Prussia. Prince Albert's first wife was Marianne of the Netherlands, who brought him an enormous fortune, and whom he divorced because of her riding master. This latter was a brute, and Marianne never had a quiet moment during his life. After the divorce the unequal pair resided at her

Highness's Castle, Kamentz, in Silesia, and the ex-hostler used to whip his royal mistress mercilessly, while she fed him on the fat of the land. When at last he succumbed, poor Marianne took another lease of life.

Four years after his divorce, Prince Albert married Rosalie de Rauch, by whom he had two sons, William and Fritz, who were created Counts von Hohenau, and entered Berlin high life.

The elder, William, a major in the Garde du Corps, married a daughter of the Duke d'Ujest, whereby he improved upon his relationship to the Kaiser by becoming cousin-german to her Majesty, too. However, by the grace of his wife's beauty, Fritz was the best known of the brothers, and his fortune, augmented by the von der Decken millions, was the amplest.

The Hohenaus, all of them, men and women, were much befriended by the old Emperor, and Count William came near inveigling Frederick III to revive in his favor the name and title borne by the morganatic wife of Frederick William III, the Countess Harrach. He would be Prince of Liegnitz today, had the late Emperor been able to sign the piece of parchment setting forth the creation during the last days of his illness.

The present Kaiser never cared much for the "left-handed brood," as he called his cousins, with the pride of the "regularly born," but when he returned from a hunting-trip to the Principality of Pless, all this was changed.

He had seen his "loveliest and most piquant of cousins," and was now convinced that Frederick the Great's motto was true, viz: that a "dash of plebeian blood here and there improves a royal race."

"Of whom are you talking, pray," asked the Empress, across the table, moving uncomfortably in her seat. "I did not know any of our set were invited."

"I had the pleasure of referring to Fritz Hohenau's wife."

"Oh, that woman. She is a gamekeeper's daughter, or something of that sort, is she not?"

The Emperor paid no attention to this sally. "Eulenburg," he addressed the grand-master, "I will go over the list of the season's guests with you presently." And from that day on Countess Fritz had to be treated as persona gratissima by everybody in the royal service for two years to come.

The vivacious woman introduced her pleasing presence on every occasion when the Emperor personally or the court played a part. She rode, hunted and skated with us; she played tennis, and went coaching with his Majesty; she danced more gracefully than a "good" woman should at our court balls and at those stupid dansants. More often than not, her Majesty returned from the riding school, where she had gone for exercise, with red eyes. "That woman was there—on a horse ten times more graceful than my own."

At state dinners the newly-found cousin's place was near enough to the royal arm chair to throw old gold-sticks into convulsions, and on lesser occasions William often conducted her Ladyship to table, while his Queen yawned herself to death at the side of some crusty General or dotish relative.

And how Charlotte's laughter rang out above the clatter of silver plate and the tinkling of bumpers! Wit, joy, enthusiasm, success, all crystallized in the tone of that voice, which the Emperor admired so much, and which her Majesty likened to a chansonnette singer's.

There were sycophants, with and without petticoats, who endorsed this later notion—a Queen can find people to believe with her in the quadrature of the circle—but society generally continued its good opinion of Countess Hohenau in the face of calumnies of all sorts. Indeed, the clever woman was a favorite everywhere and that, with her youth and beauty she didn't capture the Kaiser's eye before, is remarkable. Maybe he avoided

her on account of the Hohenau-Emperor-Frederick entente cordiale.

One of the blue-blooded participants of the battle in Pless tells how the Kaiser first became interested in Cousin Charlotte.

"We were awaiting him in the court yard, the horses being drawn up in a semi-circle. My immediate neighbor on one side, was the only lady in the company, Countess Fritz. She rode a long-legged hunter of a peculiar red color, straddling the animal. Her costume was appropriate to this manoeuver: short Russian trousers, reaching to the knee, a close fitting cut-away velvet coat over a red vest and shirt, the latter partly hidden by a green tie, a jaunty Calabreser hat, and high patent-leather boots reaching a little over the knees in front, but cut out in the back.

"As the Kaiser appeared in the door and stood still a moment to acknowledge our greetings, his eye caught the parcel of loveliness at my side. Scarcely was he in the saddle when he cried out: 'Cousin Charlotte, a word with you.'

"I will bet my best pointer the Countess had expected the invitation," continued my informant, "but women will be actresses, you know. She played the surprised, the bewildered. Perfect horsewoman that she is and capable of subduing the most stubborn beast, the fox-mare got away with her—apparently. She reared, pawed the air, and seemed altogether unmanageable. Never saw anything better done at Renz's. (Renz was then the foremost circus of Germany.)

"Suddenly a blow from Madame's gold-headed whip between the horse's ears, and with one leap the amazon was at his Majesty's side. 'Well done, cousin,' we heard his Majesty say. They galloped ahead, the rest of us following at a respectful distance, dog-trot pace."

Of course Madame von Kotze was far from pleased at the advent of this new star. Rivalries were inevita-

ble between the royal favorites, though his Majesty did nothing to provoke them, as far as I could observe. Possibly he treated the Countess with a little more freedom under his wife's eyes, utilizing the formerly disputed relationship as a pretence, but in all other respects Madame von Kotze's position was unshaken. She continued her visits at court whenever the Kaiser was at home, and her beauty and style caused her Majesty's ladies most exquisite heart-burnings.

Indeed, her Ladyship angered the dames more than ever because of the increasing luxury of her toilets, for, woman-like, she meant to surpass Countess Fritz by new creations of the milliner and tailor as well as by mental and physical gifts. In this endeavor to out-Eugenie Eugenie the tongue of the balance inclined now to one side, now to the other.

I remember Countess Fritz cutting out her Excellency at the Schleppen Cour (drawing room) by a superb gown of white gold brocade, edged with blue fox; but things were evened up when Master of Ceremony von Krotze conducted Prince Albert's daughter to a fauteuil in the rear of the orchestra at the gala opera, performed a few weeks later, where she had to sit among army officers' wives and ordinary privy councilors.

My seat was opposite the royal box on that occasion, and if I live a hundred years I shall not forget the smile of satisfaction that overspread Augusta Victoria's countenance as she perceived her cousin in semi-obscurity. The Kaiser himself had only a malicious grin for his uncomfortable favorite.

However, next day we experienced one of those intermittent upheavals for which the reign of William II was notorious. This erratic monarch could not get along without rows; in his ministries, in parliament, or at home somewhere there were always axes to grind.

William had enjoyed his cousin's discomfort in the theater; he had thought it funny "to set the two women by the ears" (the satisfaction with which her

Majesty viewed the spectacle was likewise not to be underestimated); but after Countess Fritz, in a private audience, sought twelve hours later, had unbosomed herself to his Majesty, all this was changed.

The master of ceremony was ordered to explain the reason for the unheard of breach of etiquette; and his excuse, that her Ladyship had arrived too late to be ranged according to her rank, was assiduously published in the palace, in the salons and clubs.

Then it was given out that his Majesty intended to rehabilitate Countess Fritz, and a banquet was forthwith held where her Ladyship acquiesced to the new order of things quite gracefully, it is said, but insisted upon being given a place where she could watch his Majesty and the Countess, and listen to the general run of their conversation. That this arrangement, which all thought natural enough at the time, was afterward turned into an argument for Herr von Kotze's incrimination, will be narrated later.

While these rivals for royal favors were disporting their anger and jealousies under her Majesty's nose, so to speak, William basked in the smiles of a very elegant lady quite unknown to the court, which affects to know everything. She was Madame, the Countess de Panafiel, wife of the Portuguese Secretary of Legation in Berlin, a grandee of his own country, who did not amount to much in Kaiserin Augusta Strasse.

We of the royal service were favored with glimpses of Madame de Panafiel's great beauty only at rare intervals, when state occasions or other festivities necessitated her attendance at court. Oftener she was seen at the opera, langorously reclining in her gilded arm chair over which she had thrown her mantle of ermine —a queenly woman, queenly of the style exemplified by the Empress of Russia and Queen Marguerite, for, with these two exceptions, all the women on the thrones of Europe were either homely, coarse, passe, or too old to be considered.

Madame de Panafiel was not so tall as the Empress, but possessed in the highest degree the charm of figure which constituted Augusta's only claim to beauty in the past—a neck and shoulders that seemed modelled by an artist's hand to support the burden of crown jewels. Add to this splendid endowment lustrous black eyes and arched brows, a fine Greek face, a noble carriage, arms like those the Venus of Milo lost and the most aristocratic hands, and you have a faint counterfeit of this grand dame, who besides, was famous for her red blonde hair.

The relations between Madame de Panafiel and the Kaiser lasted four years until her husband was suddenly recalled to Lisbon. There was no one more surprised at this than the Emperor, who had already lost Madame von Kotze, and even before that had been obliged to sever the ties which bound him to Countess Fritz. We were at the Neues Palais when the news reached my mistress.

"I wonder what the Kaiser will say to this? Send out to ask whether he is in the Vortragszimmer," she remarked unconcernedly, though the red blood mounted to her cheeks.

Unhappy Majesty, thou wert cheated out of a jealous woman's pleasure to rejoice in a hated rival's downfall, to feast thine eyes on a straying husband's disappointment, when he finds himself outgeneraled.

On receiving a telephone message of Panafiel's recall, the Emperor had hastened to Berlin to inquire into the meaning of the act. The Portuguese Ambassador could give him no satisfaction. Beyond the simple notification by the Minister of Foreign Affairs, he had received no information from his capital.

However, before nightfall a report that her Majesty was at the bottom of the affair spread in the palace.

Augusta Victoria, it was said, had stated her grievance to the Queen of Italy, and the latter, a truly sympathetic woman, had promised relief; a letter to that

effect from her Italian Majesty, had been seen by some one in the Kaiserin's confidence. Through the late King Umberto, the Empress's wish had finally been communicated to Queen Maria Pia, who caused her son to name Count Panafiel's successor.

Madame von Leipziger, the wife of the former court cotillion leader, retained the royal favor a little longer than the ladies named; but she was homely—a Madame de Stael, on a small, very tiny scale, rather than a Ninon de l'Enclos. Short, with irregular features and bad complexion, this woman gained her ascendency over William by means similar to those employed by Talleyrand to secure a reputation as a wit and inventor of bonmots.

As the ex-bishop of Autun was never long without his "breviary," the "Improvisateur français," a many-volumed collection of anecdotes and smart sayings, so was Madame von Leipziger, while at court, forever brooding over old and new volumes of magazines, devoted to charades, puzzles and riddles. She made his Majesty's acquaintance at an early age, when he was a student at Bonn, her birthplace, and knew and appreciated his passion for those gentle gymnastics that are liable to give conversation a sheen of esprit.

The Kaiser, you know, wants to do uncommon things all the time, and where his lion's skin fails to reach, he is content to piece it out with the fox's; in other words, when he finds it impossible to startle his friends and acquaintances by grand schemes, by criticisms of this, that or the other thing, by compositions in verse, or prose, or of musical character, he likes to give proofs of his ever-ready alertness by proposing riddles or charades, which the person who happens to be on the rack must assume to be unable to solve, otherwise the imperial oracle would have to forego the very pleasure for which the comedy was arranged—namely, to give the Emperor an opportunity to boast of his superior acumen.

It seemed to be Madame von Leipziger's real object in life to foster this weakness. Ever since the kingly dignity has sprung into existence, there have been royal favorites, utilizing their sway in various manners. Some inspired their lords with good or evil ambitions, made them better or worse men, encouraged or discouraged their inclination for mercy or cruelty, for art, the sciences or literature. Frau von Leipziger was probably the first to abet a master's disposition to drive his subjects to despair by more or less senseless riddles.

It cannot be my purpose to weary the reader by picturing the gloom the puzzle-headed hydra at times cast over the court. The reptile of mythology, we learned at school, had nine heads, each of which, when cut off, shot up into two new ones. In similar style her Ladyship and the Emperor used to launch forth new attacks upon our good nature as soon as we had disposed of one ambiguous proposition.

But even though Madame von Leipziger's relations to her hubsand were of the most innocent character, her Majesty disapproved of them. So the news gazetted one fine day, that Herr von Leipziger had resigned from the army, surprised no one, and Princess Adolph of Lippe voiced general opinion at court when she said: "My sister-in law would not have any woman under fifty amuse the Kaiser."

Thereafter the charade-fiend went to live in the country, and we have never been able to discover whether the Emperor's assertion that Madame von Leipziger is "one of the most intellectual women of the time" is true or not, for the court knew her only in her detestable specialty.

Her Majesty's girdle was already hung with many scalps of beauties. The times change, and men change with the times. The Kaiser, who once freely resorted to tricks to keep his wife from interfering with his private plans, now abandoned, one after another, the women whose company he had enjoyed.

CHAPTER IX

"COURTLY manners," they say—Well, look at these:

The riding-school of the Berlin royal stables was gay with the women of our court and society. His Majesty proposed to make the Hubertus hunt the event of the season, hence the preparations. Some of us had to become used to fresh horses, others had to learn anew the intricacies of the various bugle calls.

Quite unexpectedly the Hereditary Princess of Meiningen (the Kaiser's sister) walked in with her lady-in-waiting, Baroness Ramin. I saw at once that her Royal Highness had indulged in "a lively breakfast," for her face was flushed, and she addressed pleasantries to everybody—even promised to ride a la Florence Dixey if somebody would lend her a pair of breeches.

"Nonsense!" cried the Princess of Hohenzollern. "Lottchen is bragging, I assure you; everybody knows that she wears the trousers."

"The real article, the r-e-a-l article," retorted Charlotte, adding with a shrug of the shoulders: "What suffices for the menage will not do at all for the manege."

Then turning to Ramin, she continued: "Now I will show you how my sweet sister-in-law" (meaning the Empress) "mounts."

She had her horse brought round to a platform reached by three steps, and, ascending laboriously, raised herself on tiptoe and let herself fall into the saddle with a thud that caused the horse to stagger.

"Just like a majestic sack of flour, eh?" she cried. "The more pity for the beast." Then she rode off, urging the chestnut to all sorts of caprioles and fancy steps.

Princess Therese was at her Royal Highness's side

like a flash, and as they cantered about, each trying to outdo the other in feats of daring, both laughed boisterously.

But if courtiers have long ears, Nemesis has legs of corresponding caliber. Indeed, in this case the dread goddess must have worn seven-league boots, for twelve hours after the impertinent words had fallen from privileged lips word was sent around that ladies were not wanted at the forthcoming outing—neither ladyships, nor princesses of the blood royal!

It being the first time that the Meiningen, Hohenzollern, and Hohenau coterie were turned down publicly, the sensation in polite circles was tremendous.

Next day attended her Majesty at *Schloss* Stern, in Grunewald. Was it the English hunting-costume that proved so becoming, or was it Wilhelm in his red coat and silk hat, or the recollection of the victory just won? Augusta Victoria looked fresh and rosy and resplendent as she galloped over the frozen ground.

Of course, royal hunts are arranged with a view to fatigue their Majesties as little as possible, and, accordingly, the boar was set free at a point where he could be brought to bay within a quarter of an hour. However, one must not run away with the idea that in our sphere promises are always kept or commands always obeyed.

As a matter of record, royalty employs in its army of retainers scores of laggards, and while I admit that the all-highest boast no special virtues entitling them to a higher standard of ethics than Mr. Smith or Mrs. Brown, I will not disguise the fact that they are subject to the same routine of annoyances as yourself and neighbors.

I remember that on the occasion of a visit to the Neues Palais by the late William Walter Phelps, of New York, who was American Minister to Berlin in the early nineties, her Majesty offered to show him the baby, and I was requested to fetch the child.

"May it please your Majesty," I said, "unless I am very much mistaken, the Prince drove out with his nurse a couple of minutes ago."

"That is impossible, Baroness," said the Kaiserin. "I distinctly told Mrs. Matcham she must not leave before lunch."

To make sure, I repaired to the nursery, where I found that my surmise was correct.

"But why did nurse disobey?" exclaimed her Majesty.

"Begging your Majesty's pardon, she told Countess Brockdorff she knew herself when it was best to take out the youngster."

I had naturally hesitated to say so; but the Kaiserin, turning to Mr. Phelps, with a smile, said: "You perceive, Mr. Minister, we are all in the same boat with respect to servants. They are the real masters of every household. If you want to see that baby, I shall have to temporize with Mrs. Matcham."

To return to the royal pig-trot.

Their Majesties followed with the well-peopled "field"—that is to say, the latter kept together during the first mile or two, but, later, redcoats began to drop out, until at the finish scarcely a baker's dozen reported, among them, on his high English hunter, the Kaiser, very proud of his achievement.

Wilhelm felt, I suppose, that for him to engage in such violent exercise was tempting fate, considering that, while his right arm only is of practical use in the management of the horse, exceptional care must be exercised for the protection of the other—not an easy undertaking while galloping among trees and through thickets.

As usual, Kaiser and Kaiserin missed the best part of the fun, which followed in the wake of Therese Trani, the wife of the Hereditary Prince of Hohenzollern.

If Therese Hohenzollern had been born Therese White or Black she would be considered vulgar, and no

American woman, who respects herself, would address her a second time, but in royal princesses a fishwife's tongue and hankering for chorus-girl's high jinks passes for " chic " and a pretty wit.

As it happened Madame Therese was the life of every party, particularly when she interpolated her speech with risque German phrases, affecting not to know their meaning; whether she took pot-luck in the mess-room or some Potsdam regiment, or encouraged her husband's young comrades to drag her along the lawn by her feet, a sport sometimes carried on in the garden of the villa in Augusta Strasse, Potsdam; whether she came to court and maddened " Dona " by coquetting with Wilhelm, or entertained her neighbors at a state dinner with an account of her first confinement, which unexpectedly occurred at a one-horse Mecklenburg watering-place, while the layette, ordered from England, was in the keeping of the custom house; whether she danced, played cards, smoked cigars or attended a " churching "—there was always something to remember of one's meeting with this more than lively young woman.

They say Therese's brother-in-law, Karl Anton of Hohenzollern, had to leave Potsdam by night and in a fog, the Kaiser having granted him six-weeks' furlough in order that her husband's just wrath might cool. Afterward lovesick Karl Anton was sent into exile at Cassel. They also say Karl Anton married Josephine of Flanders, an unhappy creature, hardly able to speak a sentence connectedly, in order to get leave to return to Potsdam and occasionally catch a glimpse of jolly Therese—there are no end of rumors, yet her Royal Highness is certainly the last person to care.

And her husband? He exhibited some fine passion once, but has settled down to a philosophical sort of life. The Princess he put in charge of Colonel von Bachmayer, an elderly man of great energy, who at-

tended her Royal Highness wherever she went and kept her out of trouble to the best of his ability.

Bachmayer rode in Madame Therese's train, too, after that obstinate pig. There were, besides Karl Anton, a host of cavalrymen and sports.

As Therese had the best horse, a start of fifty paces and rode like mad, she was bound to get to Spandau before their Majesties if she kept it up. Her horse did, but not her Royal Highness.

When Therese was urging her steed through a clump of trees with overhanging branches, the tragedy of the forest of Ephraim was probably most foreign to her mind. But history repeats itself. Her skirt caught in the branches as did Absalom's hair, and she was left suspended, while her hunter pressed on. The men witnessed the bloodless accident with delighted wonderment, but before they could reach the unhappy King's daughter, she was on her hands and knees, and a wide rent showed in the seat of her riding trousers, while the skirt still hung overhead.

At once a dozen cavaliers drew rein and dismounting assisted Therese to her feet. She struggled. "No, no; don't you see I must sit down?"

"Stop," said Bachmayer in tones of authority, "your Highness will stand with your back to the tree, while we will re-arrange your skirt in front."

Sound advice this.

"Now will your Highness gaze at the tree for a while?" suggested the Colonel.

"I'm so ashamed!" faltered the Princess between giggles.

"All unmarried men turn about face!" commanded Bachmayer. Ours used to be a well-disciplined army, and the officers obeyed while Therese turned around, and, standing in the attitude of the Venus de Medici, allowed Karl Anton to draw enough hair-pins from her head to fasten what was left of the skirt onto her waist.

Meanwhile, one of the reserve horses had been fetched and the merry crowd started off again.

Her Majesty's horses were selected more with reference to handsome appearance and strength than to juvenile fire. Indeed, Augusta Victoria seldom rode one under the age of twelve, although, as a general rule, a decade was the age-limit for animals in the Kaiser's stables. Moreover, her horses were so perfectly trained and of such lamb-like disposition that, to quote once more the Princess of Meiningen, "they will not wink an eye or move an ear except on most gracious, all-highest command." Her Royal Highness's bit of comedy, depicting the Kaiserin in the act of mounting, was likewise founded on fact: a portable platform was kept in all the royal courtyards and parks.

Yet these august personages never dream that their affections are transparent to the people about them. I was told by the Emperor's adjutant, Count Moltke, that when, on the occasion of a family excursion on horseback, he pointed out Prince William, praising him for his steady seat, her Majesty said: "Ah, he inherited his horsemanship from me," a remark which caused the Kaiser to sniff with impatience. Still, the truth of their mere humanness was occasionally brought home to the King and Queen.

Here are a couple of anecdotes to the point from Hubertusstock. The Kaiserin accompanied Wilhelm to an evening's rut-of-hart-shooting in a certain section of the forest, where the imperial Nimrod was certain of making a big haul.

The pair drove off with high expectations, the Kaiser in his new "hunt uniform," the Kaiserin wearing a gown of white cloth, silver-braided. But though conditions seemed favorable—moon discreetly hidden behind clouds, wind blowing out of eminently correct quarters—something managed to frighten the stags away and out of reach as often as a fine pair of antlers came before William's barrel.

The Kaiser allowed himself to be fooled in this fashion three long hours, until finally, losing patience, he ordered the horses brought around. Getting into the carriage, he noticed an old gamekeeper, who stared at the Kaiserin in a rather disrespectful manner.

"What is it, my man?" inquired the Kaiser, who was beginning to suspect; perhaps you can tell us why no confounded deer would come within range this evening."

"To be sure, Majesty, plain as daylight, that. Any fool knows that animals are skeered of white."

The remark was so apropos that Wilhelm overlooked its rudeness, and, turning to his wife with a mock bow, exclaimed: "That settles your bacon, Dona. In future I shall know better than to take a fashion-plate hunting with me."

The disgruntled couple arrived at the châlet after midnight, and the Kaiser told me he would take supper alone, i.e., with his gentlemen. Accordingly Augusta was in a fearful temper, though the cook had provided potatoes in their jackets and cold pork. Everything and everybody was in the wrong and was scolded.

"Of course, none of you ladies knew enough to remind me that I possess not one garment fit for the chase." With these words the Kaiserin wound up a long series of complaints, adding: "Order Lampe to get up a full-skirted hunting-costume of the usual material, with green velvet trimmings, within forty-eight hours."

"But his Majesty being so particular as to color," I ventured to suggest, "would it not be better to send a sample of cloth?"

"A good idea," cried our mistress, her face lighting up. "After his Majesty has retired, get the valet to cut a sample from one of the turnings of his suit and enclose that to Lampe. And be sure to use an envelope

with the imprint: 'On his Majesty's Service.' That will carry it through by noon tomorrow."

While his Majesty inflicted his costly presence upon the nobles and rich officials of Berlin and Potsdam according to his whims and preferences for society, his visits to the hunting-grounds of friends in all parts of Germany were matters of routine, as he looked upon the use of the country's preserves in the old feudal sense: as his sovereign right.

Whoever, prince or private, entertained the Kaiser to a shooting once, was sure to receive, at the opening of the next season, a letter from the court marshal announcing that his Majesty will be graciously pleased to decimate his game on such and such days—this if the first hunt was entirely satisfactory.

When his Majesty went to a shooting, he seldom stayed longer than two days, the cost of his entertainment being between forty and fifty thousand marks (eight to ten thousand dollars), and one need but glance at the preparations on the host's part to appreciate the cost of the outlay, which, moreover, was vastly larger at the first visit.

The country residences of our Prussian grandees, you must know, were, as a general thing, quite innocent of sanitary arrangements, and often several rooms had to be entirely rebuilt and furnished with running water before his Majesty would set foot in the house.

Now, an unsophisticated reader might think that to plead old-fashionedness would scare away William, but that is a miscalculation. If he scented a full game-bag on any baronial domain, he would invite himself and only when it was too late to raise objection did the court marshal put in the standing claims of his master. A bedroom similar in all respects as to size and appointments to the Kaiser's own chamber at home, brass bedstead, horse-hair mattress, an enormous wash-stand, windows and doors secured by an endless number of curtains and portieres, and—here comes the rub—a

connecting-room with the latest paraphernalia of the bath.

"Mark Twain has written many funny things about the German and his tub, or the absence of the latter," said Court Marshal Count Eulenburg to me, after meeting the American humorist at a dinner given by the late General Verdy du Vernois; "but he could surpass himself if I were free to give him only part of the correspondence I have had with our nobility on the subject of providing bathing facilities for his Majesty. How they struggle and twist and squirm against the introduction of this novelty, which, they claim, would destroy the harmonious appearance of rooms that for hundreds of years were untouched by the mode. One gentleman in the province of Prussia, tried to evade the obnoxious obligation by suggesting that he dared not offer his Majesty a bath after one night's journey, as it involved the insinuation of dirtiness on his guest's part."

Besides his bath, Wilhelm insisted upon most luxurious bedroom furnishings, the carpeting throughout of country residences, a four-in-hand aid, a chef from some famous Berlin or Paris restaurant or hotel. Likewise, some of his hosts had to build a carriage road, a mile, or perchance, ten miles long lest the invited guest cancel the arrangements at the last moment.

And those Potemkin villages! That nothing might grate on the imperial feelings, the baron or prince compelled his peasants to whitewash and paint farmhouse and hovel, while he himself furnished greens and flags to decorate the streets, engaged torch bearers to light up the highway on the eve of the arrival and during the nights of the visit, and employed four hundred to five hundred beaters, at the very least, a week or longer.

For the Kaiser was not content to shoot the game on his friend's domain; his host, if he loved his peace, would hire all the hare, deer or roe for a dozen German

miles in the neighborhood and let them be driven into his own preserves. Of course, the dislodged game did not remain voluntarily in its new environment, and had to be kept from running away by continuous beating up; sometimes, too, much game was trapped in other parts of the province and carried to and kept in thickets on the spot selected for the chase, to be released when the great slaughter began. Besides, Wilhelm seldom brought fewer than twenty gentlemen, and even more servants, all of whom must be lodged and fed and horsed, and a royal flunky in a strange house pretends to be almost as much as his master. Fed on scraps at home, he impudently demands the best of everything elsewhere, and generally succeeds in obtaining it, as complaints on the host's part would lay him open to suspicions of nearness.

For the Kaiser himself and his titled friends, the caterers sent their choicest wares beforehand, all the delicacies of the season, and the next to follow; under the load of mighty barrels branded in many languages, groaned the ancient cellar-beds of oaken beams, and mysterious bottles with dirty labels told of old vintages and lynx-eyed connoisseurs.

And what said William to this splendid hospitality, this lavish expenditure for his benefit?

If everything went according to program, if game was plentiful, the weather fine, his bath and the cooking better than at his own house, he would remark, on leaving: "Be assured Madame," or —— (naming the host without prefix of courtesy or title), "I have enjoyed myself; and if one thing gave me more pleasure than the other, it was the fact that you made no fuss, asked the Kaiser to take pot-luck with you, so to speak. That is as it should be. I desire to be free to visit my people without causing them the least trouble or expense."

But if weather or wind, the elements above or those below (in the kitchen), went against the imperial grain,

if the populace's shouts of welcome did not seem hearty or loud enough, or if one of the other guests exhibited greater skill in bringing down game than himself, William simply ordered his carriage, drove back to the house, and went to bed. That happened in the course of years once or twice at each house visited, for there were yet some things completely oblivious to his Majesty's claims of omnipotence—game and guns.

It seems incredible, but it's literally true, that a shortage of a couple of hundred hare cost Count Botho the proudest office under the Crown; that a single buck came near depriving the nation of the services of one of the ablest officers in the army; that for the sake of a few tough rabbits the Kaiser insulted a venerable general of his grandfather in a manner that would have resulted in a duel if rank did not make a crowned poltroon inviolable.

One example of many:

As long ago as the early nineties, the Kaiser tried to forestall the revolution that at last materialized in November, 1918, ordering the then President of the Prussian Ministry, Count Botho Eulenburg to railroad through the Diet and House of Lords an arbitrary anti-revolutionary bill of Wilhelm's own making, which attempted nothing less than the abolishment of the constitution—such as it was. Botho, working under the Kaiser's lash, acted like a bull in a china shop, the country was aroused, the politicians raised Cain and Chancellor Caprivi, a thorough Prussian, seized the opportunity to stab Botho in the back. As the noble Prussian nation heartily approved of the maneuver, William promptly disavowed Botho and upheld Caprivi.

At the same time he decided on a visit to Castle Liebenberg, the country seat of his bosom friend, the infamous Philip Eulenburg, who, at the time, had not yet made his appearance in the criminal court. Even at the height of his success William never could face the discomforts of political defeat. Unless affairs of

state went exactly as he wished, he would run away and, ostrich like, hide his head far from the maddening crowd. Thus, when the Zaern affair was scandalizing the fatherland, William went carousing and fox hunting with Prince Eulenburg; cowardice or neglect of duty —which?

At Philli's seat, the Kaiser found all Eulenburgs except Botho: the Ambassador; the court marshal; the commander of the Body Uhlans, and Major Count Eulenburg.

The supper was of the finest; roast turkey, saddle of roe, stewed cherries and cucumber salad, courses which the Emperor likes to eat wholesale. Having chopped the tender meat with his knife-fork, he mixes it with the sweets, potatoes and greens into a hotch-potch and swallows with relish. "For dessert we had biscuit pudding with chocolate sauce; is there anything better in the wide, wide world?" he demanded.

The dinner was followed by the usual noisy entertainment, at the conclusion of which Saltzmann, as "lightning portraitist," caricatured various members of the party present, winding up with a cartoon exhibiting the hasty evacuation of the Reichstag at the entrance of Count Botho armed with a mace, emblem of imperial authority.

"Don't wipe that out!" cried the Kaiser when Saltzmann was about to apply the sponge; "I will telegraph Botho to attend us tomorrow, and in the evening we will spring this surprise on him and hear what he has to say."

The imperial weathercock had veered again, this time showing a smiling face to Botho—owing to the good dinner, no doubt.

But on the morrow the two gun-chargers who stood behind the Kaiser in the hunting field often remained idle for three or four minutes in succession—think of it!—and the game was at no time thick enough to admit of a wholesale massacre, such as William delights in.

So, when after three hours it was reported that he had killed only one hundred and one hares, he sent for his carriage and without further ado drove back to Liebenberg, there to seek the seclusion of his chamber, from which he did not emerge until next morning.

Count Botho attempted to wait upon the Kaiser, as commanded, and was told to "get out of his Majesty's way." The chase had been "amateurishly arranged;" there was "no discipline in those confounded beaters," and "one could have better sport walking through the park of Sans Souci than on such preserves."

The Kaiser's correspondence with his wife during his frequent absences from home consisted mainly of telegraphic reports of the number of game he killed. We ladies, therefore, took little interest in these messages, though etiquette and policy compelled us to feign enthusiasm. But once, when the Kaiser was at Proeckelwitz there arrived a telegram that caused the liveliest concern, not to say excitement. "Just shot a buck which Kessel shot past. Wilhelm," read the badly-constructed telegram.

Augusta Victoria laughed and joked about it; but the rest of us saw in the triumphant tone of the missive only the disturbing evidence of a wrangle between two friends, the Kaiser and his efficient adjutant-general who, by the way, was a man of sense, exercising the best influence over his erratic master.

In this case the breach in friendship of long standing was allowed to heal; but a similar incident cost William the affection of one of the royal family's stoutest supporters, Count Lehndorff, who had been the favorite adjutant-general of the old Emperor.

Out of compliment to Wilhelm, who regarded everybody who had enjoyed his grandsire's friendship with a sort of veneration, the old general had been placed next to the Kaiser at a chase in Neugattersleben.

As on that eventful occasion in Liebenberg, the hare did not rush to the slaughter as fast as William liked

and at the finish "only" two hundred and ten leapers were placed to his credit. His neighbor, Count Lehndorff, brought down forty.

"Two hundred and ten plus forty makes a round quarter of a thousand—a royal number for a bad day," exclaimed William, who was in great ill-humor. "Confound the impudence of the fellow who shoots game coming within range of my rifle and which properly belongs to me."

At this insult, Lehndorff's right hand instinctively seized his hunting knife, but his temper got the better of him for a single moment only.

"The fellow who handed William the First the diploma that made him German emperor may well consider himself above the charge of impudence," he said, in his simple and impressive style. And, turning to his friends, continued. "I will not quarrel with the grandson of the king whom I attended in three victorious wars and at whose side I courted death at Königsgratz when all seemed lost."

A stiff bow, and the old governor got into his trap. He ever after avoided William's company "as that of a madman's."

And as a butcher exhibits his meat (and is proud of the display), so the Kaiser showed off the trophies of his skill as a death-giver. The most prominent object in his study was a long table, covered with green cloth, containing the antlers of the roebucks killed by him in the course of the year, while under the table, and all around on the floor, were the bigger antlers of slain deer.

Ministers of state delivering reports upon which hinged the fate of government measures, of peace or war, or, perchance, the life of some doomed man appealing to the king's grace, had to be prepared for interruptions: "Look at this ten 'ender'" (meaning antlers with the given number of branches)—"the prime stag

among a battalion I mowed down at" some place or other.

Gun-charger Rieger had care of these trophies, and had little time for anything else. At great dinners, when he stood behind the Kaiser's chair, this man was often consulted about dates and incidents as William told visitors of his killings in time of peace. And the world knows how he kept up his record as a butcher during more than four years. Instead of hares he massacred children; instead of deer he slew women and old men, nurses, priests and prisoners. He should worry!

While the members of the Kaiser's staff often asserted that he was never in better humor than after successfully playing some trick upon a friend, it shall not be denied that he was agreeable enough if he had half a mind to be. He loved a merry jest at a stag party, knew the art of making pleasant conversation; sang, badly, it is true, but nevertheless entertainingly enough among friends; enjoyed what he considered "good" music, and was a clever hand at any game—billiards, skat, poker, and whatnot? and, better still, he never allowed the stakes to go above a quarter of a cent a point.

If Diana smiled upon him, and the host showed a lucky hand in the selection of the menu, he usually ordered his portfolio of photographs to be brought in after dinner, and, leaving everybody a choice of pictures, inscribed his name, together with the date, and often some cheerful words of remembrance, on a dozen or half a hundred pasteboards, as the case might be.

Some of these signed photographs were given to American friends—the Armours, Goulds, Vanderbilts, Morgans, etc. Whether they kept them after the invasion and desolation of Belgium, I don't know, but I do know that at many English townhouses and country-seats bonfires of Kaiser portraits flared up gayly after

August 14, 1914. I remember calling upon the Marchioness of Londonderry one morning in the last week of August of that year, when her Ladyship's secretary came in to say that he " found 'em all as listed."

" Then into the kitchen range with 'em, frames and all," said the Marchioness.

" Had I better a tear 'em up first? " suggested the secretary.

" It would be a waste of time; no one wants pictures of that German swine now "—this from her Ladyship, an amiable woman, noted for her polite accomplishments.

At the time when the Kaiser's hunting mania was at its height, the late Eugene Richter made his great speech against William's hunting companions, who, he thundered, manipulated the Kaiser at will.

" My African empire for a lettre de cachet that will send this pig-dog to Spandau! Would I not gladly forget all about him there! " shouted the Kaiser at dinner, when the report of the tirade reached him.

" His African empire! " If it had gone as cheaply as that, Mr. Wilson might have saved himself much anxiety.

As to Richter, William's fellow-pig-trotters certainly had influence with him, but to obtain the sway Richter imputed to them, they would have had to go to school with Anna, the cook. She was the queen-bee of the *Schloss* while turkey was in season, and, if fate had made her a lady, instead of a poor country-wench, she might have had first place in the royal menage for the asking, with the proviso, however, that she never left off feeding the Kaiser's gluttonous appetite for the Thanksgiving bird.

Whenever our court marshal discovered a new victim eager to place his game at William's disposal, he was careful to inform the noble gentleman that the regulation hunt dinner should consist of at least six courses:

But when the Kaiser assembled his generous friends at his own fireside " simplicity " was trumps, dinners being tabooed, and only breakfast, late luncheon, and suppers were offered, where cutlets and beefsteak took the place of roast, and fried apples formed the dessert, with beer or light wines, and punch as a substitute for champagne.

So the imperial guests usually made for the nearest restaurant as soon as they returned to town.

" They come from dinner at court," remarked the people, who recognized the hunt uniform; " no wonder they are famished. Prussian provisioning makes lean horses."

I once heard the Kaiser say: " If circumstances prevent the king from going to war—why, he must do the next best thing—make war on beasts. Hence, my devotion to the chase. I want to become accustomed to bloodshed so I may face those most frightful massacres, which The Day—our world's war—will bring about without turning a hair."

If you think this an original, as well as a wickedly criminal, atrocious idea, you are mistaken.

Mohammed Toghlak, an Asiatic tyrant, of bloody fame, at one time arranged a tiger hunt on a greater scale of magnificence than he had ever before attempted: Hundreds of war elephants, thousands of retainers and beaters-up!

But while proceeding to the neighborhood selected, the Sultan fell to thinking, and, after reflecting, suddenly changed his mind.

" I am tired of running after overgrown cats," he told his people—" such is unworthy of a great king. We will hunt men this time."

" But these are your Majesty's faithful and peaceful subjects."

" Never mind—I crave the sport."

Then the tiger-hunters turned man-hunters, one and all, and not until 25,000 men, women and children—

25,000, count 'em—were slain did Mohammed cry "halt."

Twenty-five thousand was quite a record two hundred or three hundred years ago. If the Kaiser in the great war had had his own way, he would not have stopped even after 25,000,000 of men, women and children had been massacred.

When the alienists get ready to examine the mental status of William Hohenzollern, they will study carefully his past mania for travel; his weird restlessness, of pre-war times; his desire to be moving on train or motor cars—symptoms of a disease that may or may not denote some deep-seated mental disturbance. He did not care where he was going—as long as he was on the move.

On either of his fifty odd estates, William was always suffering with ennui. He could not bear to stay at home.

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